

SB 117

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Burpee (W. Atlee) & Company

FORTY YEARS BURPEE SERVICE



FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY SUPPLEMENT
1876 — 1916

SB117
B92



A Few Words from the Founder



TO MY FRIENDS, OUR CUSTOMERS:—

Forty years is a long time, especially when it's the forty that separates a boy of 18 from a man of 58. A boy of 18 who was thrilled with the wonders of the Centennial Exhibition, full of enthusiasm, he was just beginning to appreciate that working with the soil is the biggest work that can be done.

And of all the forty years that ever have come and gone, these marking the growth of that boy's business from a mere handful of orders to the largest mail-order trade in seeds have been the most wonderful.

Think of it, my friends,—when the doors of our business were first opened, electric lights were a rarity and telephones not yet in general use. No one had thought of an electric street-car and the snap-shot camera was unknown. The largest steamship then crossing the Atlantic could be easily carried on top of most any average liner to-day, and the first successful automobile was not to appear until fifteen years later.

If any one had talked about such a thing as wireless telegraphy we'd have thought him crazy, and the idea of being able to "can" talk and singing in a machine so as to unwind it at will would have marked a man as a fool. There were balloons, of course, but no airships. And there were no Bush Limas, and no Golden Bantam corn!

Indeed, when we look back over the last two-score years we may say we have lived in the most wonderful

times that ever were. It has been a period of unprecedented progress in all lines—and this is specially true of the seed

business. Forty years ago the boy who is now writing these words to his friends throughout the best country on earth had a few ideas as to what might be done in the way of bettering the seed business. Some of these have been proved good and others have been dropped as impractical. As time went on, however, he began to think the very best thing he could do was to plant RELIABILITY in folks' gardens.

That's what we need, after all, isn't it?

The reliable helper is the one we want around. The reliable merchant is the man we want to deal with. The reliable horse is the best in the stable, even if he isn't the handsomest or fastest. But this boy, as he grew older, kept on working for reliability in seeds. Of course, he wanted to produce and send out to his customers as good seeds as could be got, but no seed is as good as it should be until it is reliable. So he made RELIABILITY his first aim, and that flag never has been taken down. It

has meant a good deal of work, a good many disappointments and failures—this forty years of working up to our present standard—and we have not yet reached our aim. *Progress* is still our watchword. Every planter



Where we began
in 1876

who reads this—whether of a flower-bed or a fifty-acre field—knows how discouragement dogs a fellow once in a while and how it takes nerve and grit to face the music sometimes.

not a one-sided business. No business of mutual service is that.

We couldn't have done what we have without the wide patronage and loyal support of our friends and customers.

And this is appreciated.

It is the thing that has kept us on the alert for every seed-benefit that might be passed along. It's what has bound us all together in a sort of big family, working to make the soil produce better and more fully, and to cut out the waste of comparatively worthless varieties and reduce work to a minimum.

As we gather around the fireside on this fortieth anniversary, I want each of you to know that in a sense you're a partner in this business—for a partner is one who shares the profits. And that you may keep on sharing the profits of the best care and thought we can put into our work is the sincere wish of
Your friend,

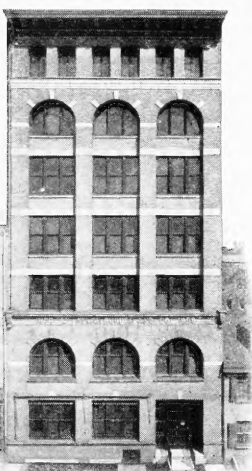
W. Atlee Burpee

The above article, while signed by W. Atlee Burpee, is a contribution from the pen of our friend, Leigh Mitchell Hodges, The Optimist, of the Philadelphia North American.

But if life went along like a song, we'd make mightylittle progress, my friends. You can't sharpen a knife on a hunk of clay. It takes a surface harder than the steel to give an edge.

S l o w l y

we've worked toward that one end of providing SEEDS THAT GROW, of the best possible quality. From the first we've thought it only fair to our customers to keep our eyes wide open for every better thing that comes along. But I want you to know that this is



Fifth Street Frontage of the
First Burpee Building
Erected in 1898

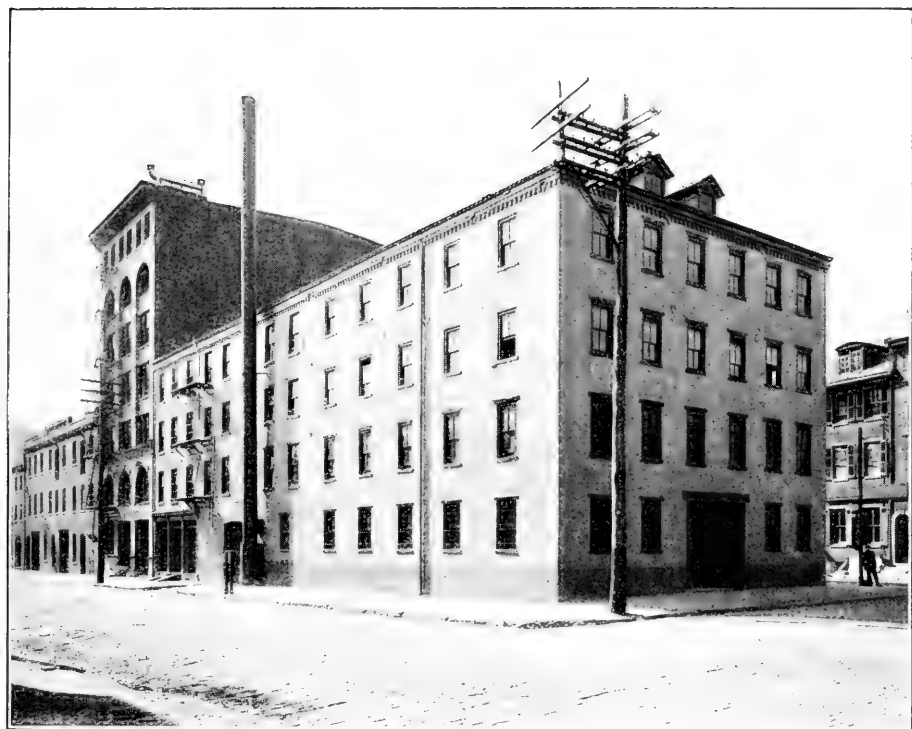


Entrance to Main Office at 485 North Fifth Street

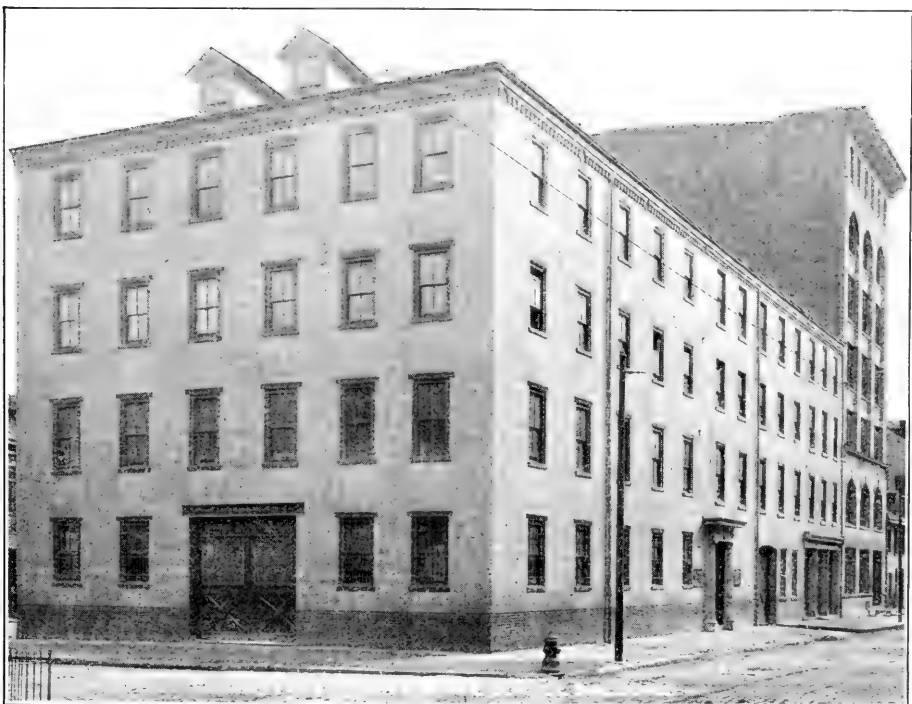
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York Avenue and Buttonwood Street frontage of the Main Burpee Buildings, Philadelphia, owned and exclusively occupied by us. Two other buildings to the south (including a double warehouse on York Avenue) are not shown in this illustration. The entrance to offices is now at 485 North Fifth Street. Our new "Daylight Addition" alone has forty-two windows on each floor exclusive of doors and transoms. The first Burpee Building (seven stories) was erected in 1898 upon the site occupied by us since 1882





Fordhook Avenue entrance



Through the woods—a northern entrance to Fordhook



The entrance to Fordhook Farms on Upper State Road, one-fourth mile from Doylestown



A southern entrance



One of Fordhook's many farmhouses



One of the Barns and also one of the Farmers' Houses
on Fordhook Farms



Harvesting a field of wheat at Fordhook



Hauling in oats at Fordhook



The Collies' commissary



Flowers and Fruits*



EIGHT hundred years before Christ a man on the plains of Assyria wrote this prophecy: "And the desert shall bloom like the rose, and the waste places shall be made green, and there shall be no lion there, nor any ravenous beast, but sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Twenty-seven hundred years have come and gone since that prophecy was written, but now the dream is coming true.

Never in all history has there been such an interest in gardening as there is today. And we are gardening not only for the sake of the fruits and flowers, but because we wish to raise better men and better women.

Man is a product of soil and climate—plus a few other things.

I do not pretend to know just exactly what a man is, but I know we are well, happy and sane only when we are in close touch with the soil.

Isaiah, who wrote the prophecy quoted above, was a farmer and a shepherd.

Five hundred years separate Isaiah and Aristotle. Aristotle was the world's first naturalist. Eusebius calls him Nature's Private Secretary. He wrote on the subjects of trees, flowers, vegetables, fruits, bees and birds. Aristotle named things, and the names of many of his plants and flowers are the classic botanical names by which they are known today.

In one of his essays Aristotle says this: "I have noticed that land that produces beautiful flowers and luscious fruits, also produces a very excellent, intelligent and able class of men and women." Aristotle seemed to look upon this as a sort of coincidence, but later in life he discovered that instead of being a coincidence it was a sequence.

We educate ourselves through our work. Men are strong only as they lay hold on the forces of Nature.

Man is a product of Nature, just as much as is the tree or the flower. Life is an expression of energy—this energy takes the form of a man, and the same energy, under different conditions, evolves into a tree. Thus do we

say with Aristotle that man is a brother to the tree.

The world's second great naturalist was Pliny the Elder, who was a soldier, but who, on his various expeditions and marches, seemed to pay more attention to the manifestations of Nature than to the doings of the enemy. Pliny the Younger is known for only one thing, and that is, that he wrote the life of his uncle. After a man is dead he is no greater than his biographer.

Pliny the Younger must have been a great man, otherwise he would not have been able to appreciate the genius of Pliny the Elder.

For upward of forty years Pliny the Elder made very close observations of the living things that he found on his travels. Flowers, birds, bees, animals, the clouds, the wind, the rain—all these things interested him. Some of his remarks today sound rather unscientific; nevertheless, through it all there is a reverence for Nature, and an earnest, sincere love of the out-of-doors that commands our respect.

THE EDUCATED MAN

Herbert Spencer says that the world has produced only six educated men. That is to say, there have been six men who were so incomparably beyond the rest of mankind that they form a class by themselves.

Then Herbert Spencer goes on to say that these men are great simply because they were lovers of Nature, and had an understanding of Nature in her manifold moods that the average man does not possess.

First in the list, Herbert Spencer puts Aristotle; second, Pliny the Elder; third, Leonardo da Vinci.

Leonardo has been called the best all-round developed man that the world has ever seen. Leonardo was a horseman, an artist, an architect, an engineer, a farmer and a gardener.

He lived at that wonderful time which we know as the year Fourteen Hundred Ninety-two.

At that time the business of farming and gardening was at a very low ebb. It comes to us with a dash of surprise that

On the way to the farm house you pass the original Fordhook farm house, more than 135 years old. Now as then it is Fordhook's protection. As the Farm Office it houses the Fordhook records and is the seat of farm operations



* "Flowers and Fruits," written by Elbert Hubbard and here reproduced, is from "The Fra" of March, 1914.

the raising of flowers as a business, or even for purposes of recreation and pleasure, was unknown in England until about the year Seventeen Hundred Fifty.

Lecky, the Irish historian, gives one man credit for what is called "The Great Awakening in England."

to his pottery. He is small and lame, but his soul is near to God."

The man John Wesley referred to was Josiah Wedgwood, founder of Etruria, and manufacturer of the famous Wedgwood ware that is still being made by the third generation in the factory founded by this marvelous man.



One of the Seven Entrances to Burpee's Fordhook Farms. When you journey to Fordhook by rail you enter the farm by this gate

This man was John Wesley, who for fifty years rode through Great Britain from Land's End to John O'Groats, preaching on tavern-steps, in graveyards, by the roadside, at fairs, wherever any one would listen.

John Wesley was the inspirer and the teacher of the plain, every-day people. He pleaded for temperance, for industry, for economy, and his whole argument was that religion was a form of commonsense.

He believed in bringing about Paradise here and now.

Accidentally, he founded a religious denomination, but this was not his primary intent.

Lecky himself was a freethinker—some people called him an infidel—and so what he says about John Wesley can be taken as eminently unprejudiced and judicial.

The Great Awakening was a wave of emotion that culminated in America in Seventeen Hundred Seventy-six.

In the diary of John Wesley, a voluminous book published in England some years ago, but now practically forgotten, I once found these words: "Preached at Burslem, a town of potters. The people are poor, ignorant and often brutal. Here I met a young man by the name of Wedgwood who had planted a flower-garden adjacent

Julia Wedgwood, a daughter of Josiah, wrote a life of John Wesley.

Josiah Wedgwood has been called the world's first modern businessman; that is, he was the first man to introduce factory betterments and to pay special attention to the idea of beauty. His factory was surrounded by ample space, so as to insure proper light and ventilation. Also, he had flowerbeds and an extensive garden, where many of his people worked at odd hours. Josiah Wedgwood gave prizes for the best gardens and for the most beautiful back-yards; and this, please remember, was nearly a hundred years ago. Wedgwood attempted to do for England, in the line of gardening, what John H. Patterson has done for America.

Unfortunately, the times were not ripe for Wedgwood's ideas as to factory building and factory surroundings; nevertheless, he left his mark upon the times.

One thing sure, he influenced profoundly another great businessman, Robert Owen, who, in degree, followed the Wedgwood idea and endeavored to make his factory not only a place for manufacturing things, but a place where men and women would evolve and grow and become. Robert Owen's factory was also a school. A product of Robert Owen's factory

idea was John Tyndall, the scientist, known to the world as one of the "big five." The other four are Herbert Spencer, Thomas Huxley, Alfred Russel Wallace and Charles Darwin. And a daughter of Josiah Wedgwood was the mother of Charles Darwin. Charles Darwin's book, *The Origin of Species*, has influenced

say. But in any event, John Wesley fully believed that there was no dividing-line between beauty and goodness. We used to regard the businessman as one who took advantage of the needs of the people. But this idea is obsolete. The businessman today is the friend of his customer. "Truth," says Doctor Charles W. Eliot,



"The Cottage" at Fordhook Farms, just inside the western gate. You follow this drive—

the world more profoundly than any other book issued within three hundred years. But in this year of grace, Nineteen Hundred Fourteen, the ideas of Aristotle, Pliny, Leonardo, John Wesley, Josiah Wedgwood and Robert Owen are to be found in many towns, villages and cities of the United States and Europe.

For instance, the Oregon plan of teaching gardening in every public school is a literal following out of the suggestions of Aristotle. Wedgwood and Robert Owen were businessmen, and never claimed to be anything else.

Business is supplying human wants. It is carrying things from where they are plentiful to where they are needed. Business is human service, and the good businessman today is essentially a public servant.

THE BUSINESSMAN

John Wesley always carried in his saddlebags packages of flower-seeds. He would distribute these seeds judiciously among his friends along the route he traveled. He would explain how to plant the seeds, and how to care for the flowers, and then he would tell his friends that he would be back that way in a year and see how these flowers flourished. In this particular thing of distributing flower-seeds, John Wesley worked a big evolution and revolution. Perhaps his flower-seeds did England as much good as his preaching, but this is not for us to

"is the new virtue." Businessmen tell the truth, for the best possible reason, and that is because it pays. The word "commercialism" is no longer used as an epithet. The business of distributing flower-seeds is not left now to the philanthropist, the preacher and the reformer; it is on a business basis.

THE HOUSE OF BURPEE

The one man in America who distributes more flower-seeds direct to planters than any other one man is W. Atlee Burpee of Philadelphia. Mr. Burpee will never be President of the United States, because he was born in Sheffield, New Brunswick. When the young man was three years of age he persuaded his parents to move to Philadelphia.

W. Atlee's father, Doctor David Burpee, desired to marry the daughter of his preceptor, Doctor Washington L. Atlee, the noted surgeon, and to get the consent of the girl's parents had to promise to move from Canada to Philadelphia within five or six years. The name Burpee was formerly Beaupré. The Beauprés were Huguenots, a splendid folk, sort of first cousin to the Quakers.

The Atlees traced a proud pedigree to William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, "that terrible Cornet of Horse," to use the phrase of Burke.

And the young people, in order to stop all argument as to genealogical preference, decided

to take the baby's advice and move to Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, and make a fortune for themselves. And the move was a good one. The youngster was named "Washington Atlee Burpee" by his mother, whose maiden name was Atlee.

In England the Atlees lived in the particular country that produced George Washington. Edmund Burke once said to George the Third, "Your Majesty, we will never whip George Washington." And the King asked, "Why?" And Burke replied, "Your Majesty, Washington is an Englishman, and he is fighting for his home."

The English spirit is a pretty fine thing after all, and well did Webster say, "The drum-taps of the British Nation circle the globe and greet the rising sun."

Transplanted products rule the world.

George Washington in America was a stronger man than he would have been in England. The families of Burpee and Atlee were bigger and better people in America than they would have been had they remained in England; and W. Atlee Burpee has exerted a wider influence and enjoyed a bigger career than he could possibly have done had he remained in Canada.

Stay in one place and you get pot-bound.

Burpee discovered that about sixty per cent of the colored people of the male persuasion in Philadelphia were named "Washington."

He then decided to part his name in the middle, and since then has called himself W. Atlee Burpee.

However, just write the word "Burpee" on an envelope and drop it in the mail-box and it will go to W. Atlee Burpee and Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

This Canadian lad started in raising garden-seeds and flower-seeds in Eighteen Hundred Seventy-six, Centennial year.

Burpee made it his task to know exactly what the seeds were that he was selling. Every lot of seeds was tested.

It takes time to prove the value of seeds. The venture grew slowly, steadily, surely. At first there was just one traveling man employed, and that was W. Atlee Burpee. Soon Mr. Burpee found that he could deal with his customers by mail. This was before the time of the Parcels-Post, but seeds do not weigh heavy, and this was an advantage. Burpee issued his little catalog and wrote letters to his friends. He began business when he was eighteen years of age, and when he was twenty-one he had a thousand dollars in the bank and plenty of



across the "Bridge of Roses," passing the Farm Office on the right, then comes—

It is the struggle to adapt yourself to a new environment that causes growth. This is about all there is in college education—a change of environment.

Washington A. Burpee went to the University of Pennsylvania, and there the boys insisted on calling him "Wash." About this time young

energy to make the thousand grow. The growth of the Burpee business has marked the growing evolution in America of a love for the out-of-doors. Slowly, surely, steadily, the business has advanced, until the year Nineteen Hundred Thirteen has been the biggest and best (although *not* the most profitable) that

Burpee has ever enjoyed. Mr. Burpee has a farm of more than two hundred acres near Doylestown, known as Fordhook. At Fordhook are raised tomatoes, corn and sweet peas as specialties, and nearly three hundred varieties of small vegetables and flowers, and these are raised just for the seeds and nothing else.

to the handling of seeds. Here, upwards of three hundred employees take care of the orders. Often between five and ten thousand separate orders will be handled in a single day. Every order is filled within twenty-four hours after it is received. There are no middlemen with whom to divide responsibilities or profits.



the Farmhouse on Fordhook. This Lawn and other Lawns at Fordhook Farms were produced from the same blend Fordhook Finest Lawn Grass as were the Lawns that won the Grand Prize at St. Louis, 1904, and the only Gold Medal for Lawns at Lewis and Clark Exposition, Portland, Oregon, 1905

Experiments are going on constantly the whole year through, under glass and out of doors. Everything that science can bring to bear in the way of betterment of conditions is being done in order to produce the finest, the strongest, the most hardy, and the most productive vegetables and flowers.

Then there is another Burpee farm known as Sunnybrook, at Swedesboro, New Jersey. This farm is sandy, and considerably warmer than the Pennsylvania soil. Here are raised tomatoes, eggplants, cucumbers, melons, peppers and special flowers.

Then Mr. Burpee has a farm in California known as Floradale. This is situated in the Lompoc Valley, between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Floradale is sacred to the raising of sweet peas and other flowers. Mr. Burpee thinks he has produced sweet peas that approximate perfection. The seeds of these sweet peas, raised in California (one hundred eighty acres the past season), are sent all over the world, and the transplantation from the sunny clime of California to a colder climate produces some remarkably beautiful flowers. In Philadelphia Mr. Burpee has warehouses which have been built and adapted especially

Burpee guarantees his goods to the full extent of the price paid, and he has gradually won the confidence of the florists and gardeners of the world, professional and amateur.

And any individual who isn't a gardener is dropping something out of his life that he will have to go back and pick up in another incarnation.

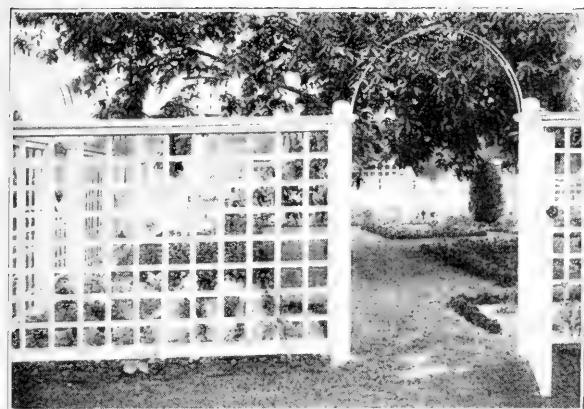
BURPEE EFFICIENCY

Once in a while you hear it asked, "What will become of this wonderful business when Mr. Burpee passes out?"

The fact is, Burpee is big enough, not only to evolve wonderful fruits, flowers and vegetables, but also to grow a very fine product in the way of men.

For instance, he has two sons, David and Washington Atlee Burpee, Junior, who are in the Agricultural Department of Cornell University.

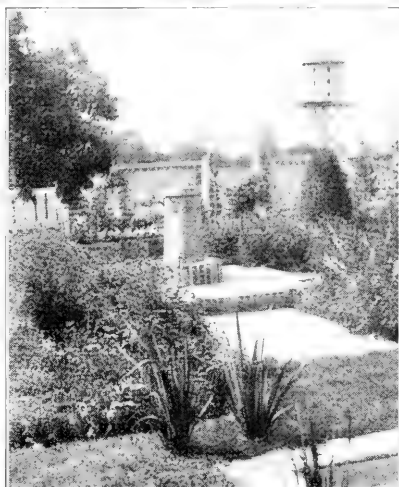
These boys are farmers by prenatal tendency. But aside from these likely lads, in the Burpee business are upwards of two hundred very strong, earnest, intelligent men and women who have grown up in the business, who take a direct, personal interest in it, and who have grown as the business has grown. Burpee is



The old-fashioned garden. The open gate of this old-fashioned garden is symbolic of the genuine hospitality that is everywhere evident when one is fortunate enough to visit this famous Seed Farm and Trial Grounds. W. F. T.



This picturesque old-fashioned garden is the particular pride of the mistress of Fordhook. The stately fountain, flanked to the east and to the west by lily pools, completes a wonderfully beautiful picture that has as a part the sun dial and pigeon house shown to the right. These broad lawns have been the scene of many a pleasant outing that will linger long in the minds of friends who gathered to share with W. Atlee Burpee and his family the pleasure that only Fordhook affords.—W. F. T.



big enough to get other people to help in his work. He has all the time there is. If you get your nose too close to the soil you will not see the stars.

Burpee's interests are widely diversified. He is a director in various banks and trust companies; takes a deep interest in educational

be? We build upon the past, and all the days that have gone before make this day possible. These great men of the past loom large before us because they had practically no competition. They were planets, while today men of their magnitude are lost in a milky way of moving humanity.



Partial view of poultry yards at Fordhook. Barred Plymouth Rocks, Brown Leghorns, White Leghorns and Light Brahmas are the only four breeds now carried

matters; is interested in sanitation, hygiene and athletics; and is a life member of the Royal Horticultural Society of Great Britain, and the National Society of Horticulture in France. Burpee has lived a big, active, generous life. Not only has he loved the flowers and the plants and the trees and the growing things, but his heart has gone out to humanity. He is a citizen of the world, and he is also a citizen of "The Celestial City of Fine Minds." And what is more, he is not retiring from business.

He is right in the seed business today just as earnestly as he was in Eighteen Hundred Seventy-six, when Thomas A. Edison exhibited the first telephone in Philadelphia.

Burpee is a worker. If you want things done, of course, you have to call on a busy man—the other kind has no time. But Burpee is big enough so he pushes his business, and does not let the business push him.

Burpee is a composite of Aristotle, George Fox, John Wesley, Benjamin Franklin and Josiah Wedgwood. And why shouldn't he

We call Benjamin Franklin our all-round educated American. But in his time the forests were a menace, trees a nuisance, and less than one-half of the men in America could read and write, and a woman who could read was a curiosity.

The planting of trees and the cultivation of flowers are comparatively new industries. W. Atlee Burpee is a close friend of Luther Burbank. He is also on good terms with about all of the strong and able men in similar lines in the United States and Europe. He is a cosmopolitan. And yet he does not forget the toilers. He meets his people on terms of equality, and is a worker among them—able and willing if needs be to perform the most menial tasks.

If there is any one man in America, more than another, who is making the waste places green, and the desert to blossom like the rose, that man is W. Atlee Burpee, seedsman magnus, and gentleman superbus.

The Burpee Business is builded not for the present only but with an outlook to the future. A business that has no vision of the future, or the object of which is mere money-making, would not be worthy a life's work.—W. ATLEE BURPEE.



W. Atlee Burpee, famous seedsman, brought two auto loads of his family to East Aurora to show them how the Roycroft Farm had improved with the use of "Seeds that Grow."—Reproduced from "The Fra," August, 1915

Inspired by his personal friendship for the founder of The House of Burpee, our friend—that inimitable genius, Elbert Hubbard honored us with the leading article, from his own pen, in "The Fra" for March, 1914. "Flowers and Fruits," reproduced on the preceding pages, is from "The Fra" of that date.

Since the untimely passing of Elbert Hubbard we have again visited the scene of his life's work and ambition.

Everywhere at Roycroft are the unmistakable evidences of his master mind and personality. More than ever we realize the greatness of the man.

More than ever we appreciate the tribute, "Flowers and Fruits," because it marks one of the places, in the last year of a busy and useful life, where Elbert Hubbard paused for a time to be of service to a fellow-man.—W. ATLEE BURPEE.



One of the Barns at Fordhook. Commodious and substantial buildings house all Fordhook operations



Farm scenes at Fordhook. Comfortable and attractive farm houses are a part of the equipment. The house to the left is situated on the David Burpee farm, which is the latest addition to the Fordhook group



The farm house in the picture above is located to the southwest of the farm house shown on page 10 and is on the Blanche Burpee farm. To the right is shown a reaper busy with a crop of oats. These are raised in rotation with other crops and are used as feed



The Burpee-Quality Seed of Tomatoes

The choicest Tomato seed has been a leading specialty with us for years. We pride ourselves on the number and merit of the varieties we have introduced. Our stock of Tomato seed is grown largely on our own FORDHOOK FARMS in Pennsylvania and SUNNYBROOK FARM in New Jersey, where careful stock selections are made. Our seed is strictly the HIGHEST GRADE obtainable. While our prices are quite moderate considering the quality of seed, we cannot compete, nor do we wish to do so, with the cheaper grades of seed,—large quantities of

some of the leading varieties being saved by canning establishments and sold at prices far below the actual *cost of growing* first-class seed. Our extensive trials each season make us familiar with all the newer introductions and standard varieties, thus we know every desirable type.

Most seedsmen charge less for Tomato seed than do we, but the seed is usually worth correspondingly less. What does the cost actually matter when you consider that it requires only two ounces of seed to produce sufficient plants to set out an acre?



Harrowing field in which to set out Tomatoes at Fordhook. Thorough soil preparation is essential to good crops. Every practice that makes for better crops is a part of the Fordhook routine



Setting out a field with plants of Burpee's Matchless Tomato. The fields are checked (or marked) both ways and careful hand-setting is practiced. "Not how fast but how good" is the planting slogan

Growing and Saving Tomato Seed at Fordhook



A field of Burpee's Dwarf Giant Tomato. Men in the distance are picking the ripe fruit while the team is loading for the washer

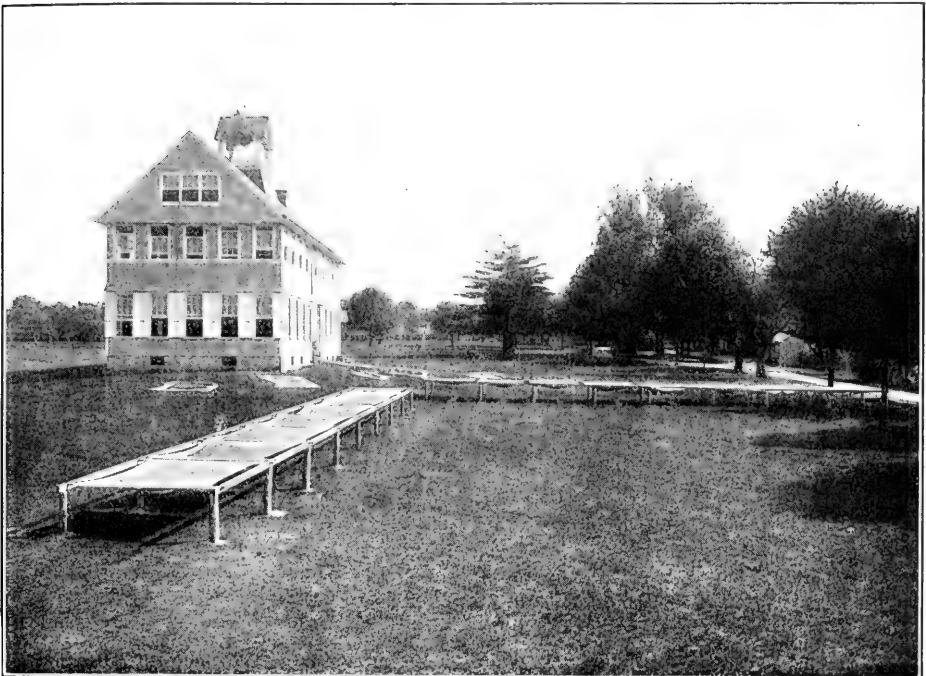


The Tomato-washer at Fordhook. Note simplicity of building. Facilities are sufficient to take care of twelve hundred bushels daily. Here we save the seed only, the pulp being hauled on fields and used as fertilizer

Washing and Drying Tomato Seed at Fordhook



Rear view of Tomato-washer. The barrels contain the ground mass after pulp and skin have been removed in the separator. The large trough-like boxes are used in thoroughly washing the seed



The Tomato Drying-racks and Seed House at Fordhook. All seed is dried naturally, and when removed from the racks is sacked and later put through cleaning machine



A field of *Phlox Drummondii Grandiflora* at Fordhook. This field looked like a great Turkish rug spread out under the summer sun



Boys picking seed of *Salvia Splendens* in one of the fields at Fordhook. We are the largest growers of *Salvia* seed in America. The block here shown is only one of a number grown at Fordhook. Another field of *Salvia* is shown on page 25

PRINTERS' INK

Registered U. S. Patent Office

A JOURNAL FOR ADVERTISERS

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE NEW YORK, N. Y., POST OFFICE, JUNE 29, 1893

VOL. XCI

NEW YORK, JUNE 17, 1915

No. 12

The Personality That Is Behind the Burpee Business

Based on an Authorized Interview by Roy W. Johnson with

W. Atlee Burpee

Of W. Atlee Burpee & Co., Philadelphia

NEARLY twenty-five years ago—December 24, 1890, to be exact—W. Atlee Burpee offered, through PRINTERS' INK, a prize of \$50 for the "best advertisement" calculated to bring business to the seed house of W. Atlee Burpee & Co. "Should there be a second advertisement also of special merit," he announced, "we will gladly pay an additional prize of \$25."

Now the ad which won the first prize in that contest has long ago been forgotten. As a specimen of the weird typography in vogue in those days, it stood high indeed, and probably was worth all it cost. But the second prize—for there *was* a second prize, and several additional awards in to the bargain—went to an advertisement which was quite modestly set around the luminous phrase, "Burpee's Seeds Grow." "That piece of copy," says Mr. Burpee, "was submitted by Wiley B. Jones, then of Burlington, Vt. Had I known how immensely valuable his phrase was to become to the business, he certainly should have received the first prize at the very least."

There you have the "origin" of one of the most successful slogans in existence. But in the humble opinion of the present writer, Mr. Burpee should have awarded an extra-special-first-prize to himself as the man who first *recognized the value* of the phrase. The ordinary individual would have passed over it as merely a com-

monplace statement of fact. "What does Mr. Burpee expect his seeds to do; sing and dance?" asked H. C. Brown, then editor of a publication called *Art in Advertising*. And a certain competitor with a fine sense of sarcasm (though as much can hardly be said of his advertising sense) devoted some half-dozen lines of perfectly good advertising space to the headline, "Weed Seeds Grow." Sometimes the make-up man would rise to the occasion by placing the "Weed Seed" copy directly beneath one of Mr. Burpee's ads—which did not worry the latter gentleman in the least.

THE WHOLE STORY IN THE SLOGAN

There were a few years during which Mr. Burpee worded the slogan thus: "Burpee's Seeds Grow, and Are the Best that Grow." "You will notice," he said, "that that expression is free from the vulgarity of claiming that Burpee's seeds are the *best seeds*. It only states that they are the best that can be grown." But for many years now the slogan has been used in its simple, unequivocal form. After all, there is nothing further that one wants to know about seeds.

And when all is said and done, that plain, unostentatious, and apparently commonplace slogan is quite typical of the Burpee business, and of the man who is its active head. There is very little of the spectacular, and absolutely

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not a trace of the sensational, to be found in the selling methods of the concern. One who is used to the high-pressure system of running a business so as to make the market yield every last order it is possible to obtain, would doubtless feel that a good many opportunities were being overlooked. He probably would want

justly charge the crop failure to his own carelessness? No, he will blame the seedsman who overpersuaded him to buy. Naturally enough, too, you must admit.

"But, on the other hand, if he received only a straightforward statement of what may reasonably be expected, from a house in which he has confidence, he is more apt to conclude that the trouble was at his end of the line. In other words, if he has been sold partly against his will, he will be resentful, while if he has sold himself, so to speak, we are likely to hear from him again."

In the present writer's opinion, you have there the whole selling philosophy of the Burpee business. It certainly doesn't harmonize with many of the most modern ideas; it would spell stark ruin for the manufacturer of washing-machines and typewriters; it wouldn't do for a dealer proposition. But Mr. Burpee has made a conspicuous success with it, and if the resulting good will of thousands of consumers was slow in the building, it is just that much the harder for competitors to tear it down.

So it practically comes down to this, as Mr. Burpee puts it: "The catalogue must sell the goods." The catalogue is a mighty important item in any mail-order business, but it is particularly important here because it has borne practically the whole burden of making sales. So important is "The Silent Salesman," as the Burpee catalogue is called, that Mr. Burpee has always written the text himself, and the descriptions of the 6,000 odd varieties contained therein are exclusively his own. When this interview took place at his home in Fordhook Farms, the most conspicuous objects on Mr. Burpee's desk were the latest copy of *PRINTERS' INK* and a pile of page lay-outs for the 1916 catalogue. That was the 21st of May, and the buying season will not begin until December. Subordinates are permitted to work up suggestions for the catalogue covers, the color illustrations, etc., but when it comes to the actual description of the goods, the guiding hand of the founder and head of the business takes absolute charge. It isn't a question of O.K'ing what somebody else has written from more or less imperfect knowledge. It is a matter of going over personally the whole body of text each year, and making a thorough revision of the descriptive matter. So dependent is the business upon the good will of the ultimate consumer that Mr. Burpee has been unwilling to entrust the catalogue work to any other hands.

NAMES WHICH CANNOT BE PROTECTED

As a matter of fact, that good-will value of his name and trademark is almost the only



W. Atlee Burpee

to "key-up" the organization the first thing, and he probably would succeed in creating the atmosphere of feverish activity. But whether or not it would result in more actual business is another question.

For be it known that Mr. Burpee is one mail-order man who does not believe in follow-up. For years he has advertised that his customers will not be troubled with follow-up literature, and it is literally true.

"In this business," says Mr. Burpee, "forced sales are like forced plants—you can raise them, but the natural growth is better. It is easy to overpersuade a man to buy a few packets of seeds, but it isn't the seeds he really wants—it's the product of the seeds. The price of the seeds is infinitesimal compared with the value of the expected crop. But suppose the crop doesn't materialize as he expects. Suppose he plants the seeds too deep (as most inexperienced gardeners do), or that he puts them under an eaves-spout, or on the south side of a brick garage where they are never watered. Will he

permanent asset which the mail-order seedsman can rely upon. He cannot even protect the new varieties which he originates and introduces. The manufacturer can secure patents to cover his inventions, he can give trade-names to his designs which can be protected, he can keep his processes secret. But when the seedsman develops a new variety of vegetable or flower, it is exclusively his only so long as he controls the supply of the seed. Any competitor can buy the seed, plant it, and raise his own supply for future seasons. The originator cannot even protect the name of the new variety, for his competitors are not offering an *imitation*, but the genuine article. Be it said to the credit of the seed trade, however, that among the leading houses there is little or no disposition to compete unfairly in the matter of names. It is quite the usual thing to find due credit given in seed catalogues when a variety is featured which was originated by a competitor. Don't get the idea, however, that the name is unimportant because its exclusive use cannot be protected. The originator of the variety has the exclusive use of it for a year or two anyway, and there is always the chance that some competitor may think of a better name. Mr. Burpee, who has originated and introduced more new varieties than any other commercial seedsman, tells of several such instances.

Thus it is apparent that the seedsman, in addition to the scientific work of producing improved varieties, has the task of giving them names which will "stick" if he is to get the full value of his investment. Mr. Burpee has been remarkably successful in this respect. This year a special folder—"The Silent Salesman's Assistant"—featuring seventy-six varieties which he had introduced, was sent to customers of record who had not ordered for two years back. Among the seventy-six names are many varieties of vegetables which have become standardized in the trade, and are identified with Burpee even though credit may not be given in every case: such names as "Golden Bantam" for corn, "Wayahead" for lettuce, "Blue Bantam" for peas, "Danish Roundhead" for cabbage, "Howling Mob" for corn, "Hailstone" for white radishes, etc., etc. Any advertising man who is interested in the psychology of trade-names can find plenty of material for study in the seed trade. The well-known "Rocky Ford" muskmelon was first introduced by Mr. Burpee in 1881, under the name "Netted Gem." It was popularly known by the latter name for many years, but the geographical name finally took precedence because the melons were grown in such large quantities around

Rocky Ford, Colorado. It is easy to see how conditions such as are noted above combine to place a great responsibility upon the man who writes the seed catalogue. And as stated, Mr. Burpee does not entrust that important work to any other hands. He must know his goods—and he does know them. At Fordhook each year more than 7,000 trials are made for vitality and integrity of strain, and upwards of 15,000 soil tests. These tests are made by counting out 100 seeds from the top, middle and bottom of containers, planting them under known conditions, and taking copious notes on the resulting growth. Mr. Burpee is in close personal touch with all of this work, and the catalogue pages are written from positive data. When you read in the catalogue that eighty per cent of a certain variety of dahlia came "true to type" at Fordhook, and that sixty per cent can be reasonably expected elsewhere, you may be quite certain that the first figure is represented by actual observation, and that the second is understated



Burpee's
THE HEADQUARTERS FOR
Sweet Peas

WITH our five farms in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and California, we have the largest, most complete grounds,—"prove all things." We were the first in America to grow "SPENCERS," and have today the choicest strains of these most magnificent, gigantic, new, white Sweet Peas. Unlike seed generally sold, our RE-SELECTED STOCKS now come absolutely true to the superb "Spencer" type

Six Superb "Spencers"

For 25 Cts. we will mail one regular packet each of DAINITY SPENCER, the new "proctor edged" pink on white;—MRS. ROUTAIN, apricot, suffused with rose;—BEATRICE SPENCER, rich pink;—GUTHRIE SPENCER, glossy deep maroon;—ASIA ONE, charming light lavender; and HELEN LINDS, bright orange-red.

These Six Superb Spencers are shown painted from nature and fully detailed on pages 110 and 111 of BURPEE'S ANNUAL for 1911. Purchased separately they would cost 66 cts. but all six packets, with a gift on top, will be mailed for only 25 cts.; five collections for \$1.00.

Six "Superfine" Spencers

For 25 Cts. we will mail one packet (50 to 90 seeds) each of BURPEE'S SPENCER, rose and pink;—BURPEE'S WHITE SPENCER, largest waxy white;—EUGENIE MORE SPENCER, light pink;—BURPEE'S PRIMO SPENCER, and a large packet (50 to 90 seeds) of Burpee's First Round for 1911 at SUPERB SPENCER SEEDINGS. Leaflet on Culture is sent with each Collection.

Five New "Spencers"

For 25 Cts. we will mail one regular packet each of BURPEE'S QUEEN VICTORIA SPENCER, primrose flushed flesh;—CONSTANCE OLIVER, rich rose on cream;—BURPEE'S ALICIA SPENCER, bright orange-salmon;—BIRD SONG, C. W. BEAUGROVE, pink, edged on cream; and TENANT SPENCER, deep heliotrope.

Whether you order now or not, you should surely write for

The Leading American Seed Catalog for 1911

AN ELIGANT BOOK OF 124 PAGES,—"THE SILENT SALESMAN" of the World's Largest Mail-Order Seed Trade, and tells the plain truth about the Best Seeds that can be grown. A SAVING GUIDE to SUCCESS in the garden, it should be consulted by all who plant seeds, whether for pleasure or profit. It is FREE to every one who has a garden. Shall we mail you a copy? If so,—write Today!

W. ATLEE BURPEE & CO., Burpee Buildings, Philadelphia

Full-page copy in natural colors, featuring the special assortments

rather than exaggerated. Mr. Burpee is his own vigilance committee, and an extremely effective one.

INQUIRIES ACCOMPANIED BY ACTUAL ORDERS

Inquiries for the catalogue are secured by advertising in upwards of 700 publications;

magazines, women's publications, farm papers and a long list of newspapers. The campaign begins in the early fall, works up to full pages just before the height of the busy season, and gradually works down again to the minimum. Certain mediums which reach large growers are used the year 'round with copy which more nearly approaches what is generally known as "general publicity." In the height of the season many back and inside covers are used, and many of the pages carry illustrations of flowers and vegetables in their natural color.

During the season of 1915, more than a million catalogues were sent out to customers of record,

Burpee's Seeds Grow

The
Leading
American
Seed
Catalog

A Post Card
Will Bring
These Books
To You



CONFIDENCE

Is the one thing that makes possible the commerce of the world. It is the greatest factor that enters into a purchase of seeds, because you are not buying a finished product, but only the means by which your garden may be either a success or a failure. Seeds—good or bad—may look the same, but their resulting crops—How different. You cannot afford to risk a season's work with seeds of unknown quality. When you buy BURPEE'S SEEDS, the element of doubt is removed so far as is possible by human care. The confidence of many thousands of

pleased and permanent customers is maintained by the Burpee Idea of Quality First—"To give rather than to get all that is possible." This confidence on the part of our customers—combined with the efficient Burpee Service—has built the World's Greatest Mail-Order Seed Business.

THE HOUSE OF BURPEE

Has introduced more distinct, new varieties of vegetable and flower seeds that are now in general cultivation than have any three other American firms, but never have we catalogued any one of these new varieties until it has passed all the exacting requirements of the Burpee Standard. This Burpee Standard is maintained by rigid tests at Fordhook Farms, America's Largest and Most Complete Trial Grounds. These tests are made each year for the purpose of strengthening this Bond of Confidence between our customers and ourselves.

BURPEE'S ANNUAL FOR 1915

Our Silent Salesman, is a bright new book of 182 pages. It is a safe guide to success, and of real value to everyone who plants seeds either for pleasure or profit. Florists and Market Gardeners should have Burpee's "Blue List" for 1915. This is our wholesale price list for planters, and the most complete catalog of its kind published. Write for these books today. A postcard will bring them both.

W. ATLEE BURPEE & CO.,

BURPEE BUILDINGS

PHILADELPHIA

Late copy which plays up the slogan and the good-will element

and in response to inquiries received from the advertising. The catalogue is never sent promiscuously to lists of names. A large proportion of the inquiries were accompanied by an actual order for seeds due to the plan developed by Mr. Burpee many years ago of offering popular combinations of seeds at nominal prices in the advertising. The copy reproduced on page six shows how some of these combinations are featured. The sale of the combination helps to pay the cost of getting the inquiry, and the catalogue is mailed at the same time with the order. It would not be fair to tell just what

proportion of the catalogues mailed produce actual, profitable orders, but it is large enough to make one's mouth water. The size of the average order is between two and three dollars, a few orders being received for as little as five cents, and some running high into the hundreds of dollars—which represents a good many seeds, it may be noted.

One thing will be noticed at once by any careful observer of the Burpee catalogue: it contains practically no directions for planting or cultivation. "There is a very good reason for that," said Mr. Burpee. "In the first place, to give adequate directions would take up too much space, and the book would become quite unwieldy. In the second place, it is useless to send the woman who wants an old-fashioned flower-garden a complete treatise on the raising of muskmelons and sweet-corn. In the third place, it is important for the grower to have the directions at hand when he gets the seed, not merely when he orders it. So we offer, on the order-blank which accompanies the catalogue, a series of forty leaflets on plant culture, any or all of which will be sent without charge if the customer requests. These leaflets are written in sufficient detail to give complete information on all points, from the preparation and fertilizing of the ground to the gathering of the crop. The customer who followed such brief directions as might be given in the catalogue, might have legitimate cause for dissatisfaction if the crop did not turn out right, but the directions in the leaflets are so complete that there is little room for failure under ordinary conditions. And on the other hand the customer who does not ask for information, but goes ahead on his own initiative, is not so likely to blame the seed house."

Furthermore, thousands of letters are received from customers each summer and fall, telling of their success or failure with certain crops, and asking for advice on a multitude of different points. These letters are invited in the catalogue, and it is a genuine invitation, for they are all answered with all necessary details. "It entails a tremendous amount of correspondence," said Mr. Burpee, "but we like it, and we keep the invitation standing. It gives us a great deal of pleasure to read of the success of our customers, and where a failure is recorded we can generally give advice which will lead to success another season."

Three years ago a department was established which is devoted to children's gardens—furnishing seeds of the regular quality in small packets at two cents apiece, and teaching the youngsters how to raise their little crops. Naturally such work is purely educational now, since the department will hardly pay for its overhead, but it is establishing friendly relations with the coming

generation of gardeners. Every feature of the Burpee business can be traced back to the good-will idea.

A "BLANKET GUARANTEE"

Now comes the question of guarantees. How can a house guarantee its product when so much depends upon the way in which it is handled by the customer? As a matter of fact, it cannot guarantee *results*, but it can and does replace seed which does not grow, or it refunds the full price paid if the growing season is over. Here is the guarantee as worded by Mr. Burpee:

"At Fordhook Farms all seeds are tested, but we hold fast to only that which is good. The field trials number fully 7,000, while more than 15,000 soil tests for vitality are made every year. The vitality can be proved easily before planting, but even an expert examination would fail to show whether seeds were of a high-grade pedigree strain or the veriest rubbish. The fact that more planters order direct from us year after year than from any other firm in America should show Burpee's Seeds That Grow have been found trustworthy. A mistake may occasionally occur (to err is human), while success depends largely upon conditions of soil and climate which are beyond human control. Hence, no honest seedsman could assume responsibility for more than the price actually paid by the purchaser. It goes without saying that if you are not thoroughly satisfied you can have your money back any time within the year, for such is the guarantee that protects all who plant seeds purchased from Burpee, Philadelphia."

That is the blanket guarantee which covers everything sent out—covers it thoroughly, one might add. While the writer was sitting in the Philadelphia offices talking to Advertising Manager Therkildson, a letter came in from a man who mildly suggested that a mistake had been made. He thought the house had sent

him husks instead of seed, for he planted some of them and they didn't come up.

No wonder they didn't. Mr. Customer had ordered dahlia bulbs, and had received them packed in buckwheat chaff. Presumably he had thrown the bulbs away and planted the chaff. Whose fault was it? Not the fault of the seed house, surely, yet Mr. Customer received a new set of bulbs, and a careful letter of explanation. That is the settled policy of handling complaints; on the theory that if a man is interested enough to complain he is worth cultivating. A complaining customer is seldom a lost customer, but the man who says nothing about his dissatisfaction may buy somewhere else another year.

It all comes back in the end to one central idea—getting the customer's good will, and keeping it by making a friend of him. Mr. Burpee holds fast to those things which have proved their usefulness, and is not inclined to try experiments which may be regarded unfavorably by those who have dealt with the house for years.

"I hope you will never change the size or form of **PRINTERS' INK**," he said. "It would be like changing the face of an old friend. When most of the big seed houses adopted the large-size catalogue page and half-tone illustrations, I kept our 'Silent Salesman' in the old familiar shape. There is a certain friendliness and trustworthiness in the familiar size and the wood-cuts, which might be lost in shiny paper and too-brilliant half-tones. The grower can slip the 'Silent Salesman' into his pocket, and take it right down into the field with him. The 'dressed-up' catalogue can't be carried without folding, which makes a very bulky and inconvenient proposition. But most important of all, our catalogue bears the face of a friend, in which our customers have confidence. That confidence is the one thing we are willing to go to any amount of trouble to protect and defend."



A view of a corner of one of the kennels, showing some of the collies for which Fordhook is famous



A third field of Phlox Drummondii at Fordhook, where many acres are grown



Girard's Topics of the Town*



"God Almighty first planted a garden," said Bacon, and ever since Eden gardening has been a highly respectable business. Emerson said that "the earth laughs in flowers,"

and John Milton, blind though he was, spoke of "flowers of paradise." I didn't intend, however, to reproduce Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, but to tell you something about Washington Atlee Burpee.

Here is a gentleman whose father was from the French Beauprès, whose mother's people, the Atlees, lived in England at the early home of the Washingtons, and himself born in Canada, works in Philadelphia and lives in Bucks County.

Besides that, he is probably responsible for more flowers than any other person in the land. Thousands of years ago it was commanded:

"In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand"; and Burpee is the man who grows the seeds you sow, hence I might almost christen him the godfather of flowers.

Nearly everybody hereabouts has heard of the wonderful Fordhook farms, near Doylestown; but bless you, broad as are their several hundred acres, they don't produce more than a fraction of all the seeds which this bucolic artist and poet distributes over the world. "Do you buy seeds in Europe?" I asked him.

"I dislike that word 'buy' because I don't buy seeds anywhere. I grow and sell them," was his answer.

Yes, Mr. Burpee not only raises tomato seeds in Bucks County, but cabbages in Denmark, beets, radishes and carrots in France, sweet peas in California and goodness alone knows how many other things in other parts of America. Each thing is grown where it will develop the best; but even so, Mr. Burpee takes nobody's say-so for a seed any more than Uncle Sam's mint will take your gold without assaying it.

When I visited this friend of Luther Burbank

* Girard's Topics of the Town is reprinted from the "Public Ledger," Philadelphia, Saturday, September 11, 1915.

at Fordhook I saw hundreds, yes, thousands, of these floral assays in progress. Every seed is tested, first to see if it will grow and second to see if it will reproduce true as promised.

Don't, fair reader, turn up your nose and exclaim that a seed is a seed. So is an egg an egg. Somebody even proved that "pigs is pigs."

Compared to some of the seeds Mr. Burpee raises, gold is a cheap and insignificant commodity. It is only worth around \$250 a pound.

A particular flower seed commands \$1600 a pound. "But we don't deal in it by the pound, only by the ounce or the dozen of seeds," remarked this erstwhile physician, who turned from healing sick humans to perfecting flowers and vegetables.

If you can develop a fine new variety of sweet-pea, for instance, it will bring you more than Kipling gets for one of his poems, and, measured by the poet's recent output, I think it is worth considerably more.

To my mind, a bean is as devoid of romance as a chunk of Belgian block pavement. Yet Mr. Burpee will tell you a pretty story about the "bush lima," which elevates that particular bean to the realms of high art.

Did you know that the first place anybody ever saw a lima bean that didn't have to be supported on a pole was in Bayard Taylor's garden at Kennett Square? A fact. There a lima bean, which presumably had no pole to lean upon, merely out of spite, just raised itself.

They took the seed of that bean, and the "bush lima" has since then been worth tens of thousands to American gardeners. And

Mr. Burpee, before his episode of the bean, introduced that elite of melons—the Rocky Ford cantaloupe. I've always thought he deserved something better than an Iron Cross for that special day's work.

However, to catalogue Mr. Burpee's seed triumphs would require a book as big as his own seed catalogue, which I understand goes to a million persons every year.

It is refreshing to hear this solid business man and banker, as well as seed grower, talk of the ethics of trade.

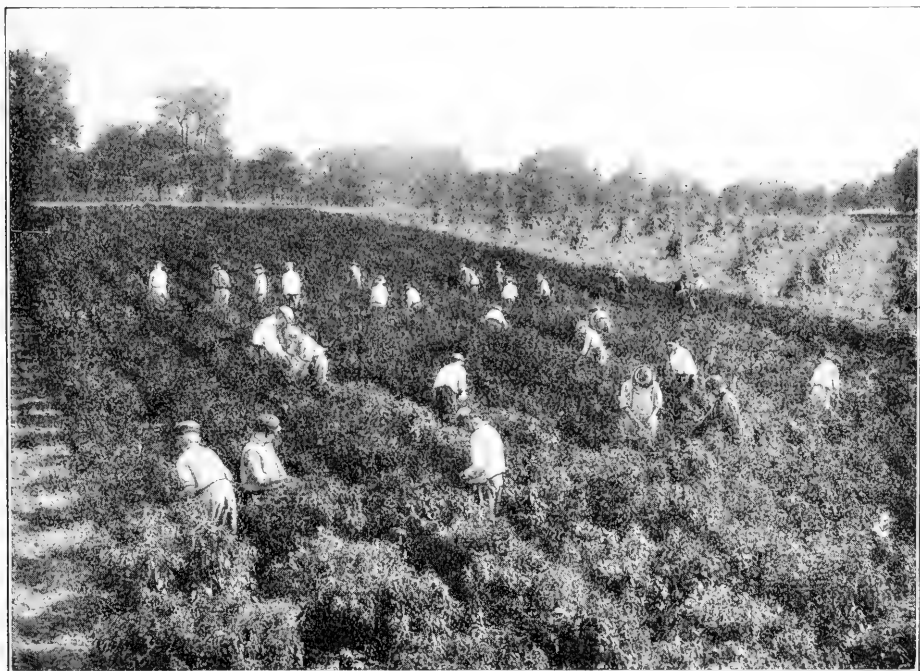
"What nonsense that competitors must be enemies," says he. "On the contrary, in our seed business we try to assist each other."

Then he announced this bit of sound business sense: "Make it a point to compete in quality rather than in price."

And as I looked out across many acres of vivid-colored flowers—raised not to sell, but simply to prove that they ran true to specifications—I could readily see why Mr. Burpee has earned his great success and why his two fine sons are only ambitious to continue it.

A fortune for the man who knows how! That was my thought as I looked at the productive expanse of Mr. Burpee's Fordhook farms, and not far away saw an orchard of 8000 peach trees burdened with fruit.

"Acres of diamonds at home," said Doctor Conwell, and that's the truth if the man has the agricultural skill to dig them. No other college today has such an opportunity to produce diamond diggers of the future as our agricultural colleges. GIRARD.



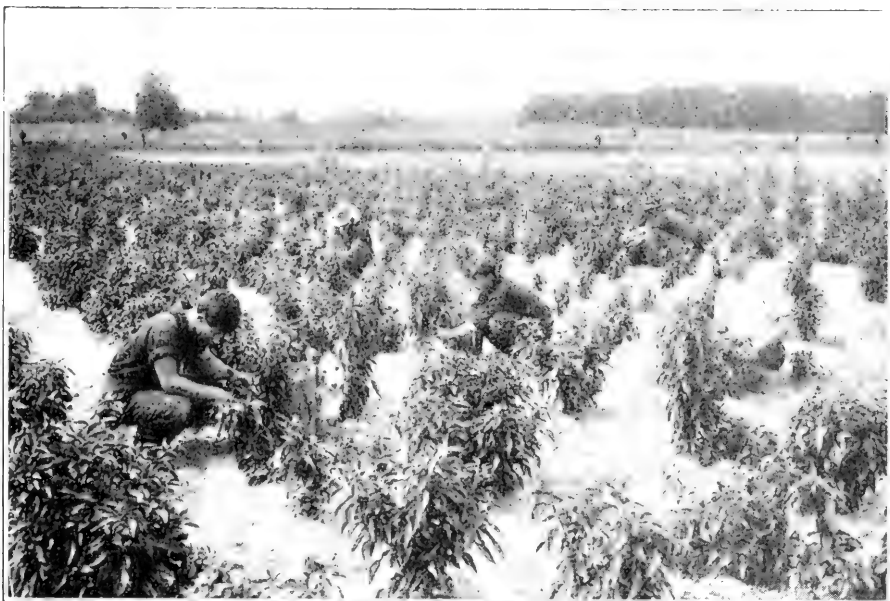
Another field of *Salvia Splendens* at Fordhook. Great glowing masses of the famous and always popular Scarlet Sage are met with all over the farms, streaking the prevailing green tint of the landscape with brilliant acres of red



A field of *Phlox Drummondii* growing at Fordhook



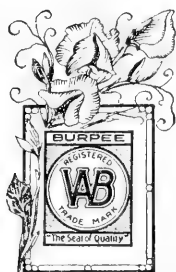
Another field of *Phlox Drummondii* at Fordhook



BURPEE'S SUNNYBROOK FARM
in South Jersey is proving a most useful adjunct to Fordhook Farms. Here are concentrated now most of our *Cucurbitaceae* trials, while some of the more important crops are grown upon our own land.

The upper illustration shows boys picking a crop of the *Neapolitan Large Early Pepper*. The small illustration to left shows the entrance to SUNNYBROOK, while the larger photograph below shows the gathering of a crop of *Burpee's Extra Early White Spine Cucumber*.





Flower Farming in Lompoc Valley

Acres of Posies Grown for Seed



Comparatively few people in Santa Barbara know about one of the most interesting, attractive and important show places of California in this county. Yet the W. Atlee Burpee & Co. seed farm, in the Lompoc valley, is probably doing as much or more than any other one thing in advertising Santa Barbara county to the world as a land of flowers, rich soil and marvelous possibilities.

About five years ago W. Atlee Burpee, who is at the head of the greatest mail-order seed

house in the world, after a very exhaustive search throughout California for a suitable place to establish an experimental farm for his famous flower and garden seeds, decided that the Lompoc valley offered the best advantages, and purchased between 50 and 60 acres of the finest land in that fabulously rich valley, and the results that he has attained during the past five years have fully justified his investment and proved his good judgment in the selection of a location.



Plowing at Floradale in October. Note the lumpiness of soil as a result of dry plowing. These lumps melt up readily when the early winter rains come

From *The Florists' Exchange*, New York, August 7, 1915

Floradale Seed Farms, Lompoc, California

By P. D. BARNHARDT, Editor of *Pacific Garden*, Los Angeles, Cal.

Floradale is the euphonious name of W. Atlee Burpee & Co.'s seed farm, near Lompoc, Cal. My first visit to the place was June 15, 1910. Since then the acreage has been quadrupled. The prophecy has been fulfilled. The last day of last June I visited the place for the fourth time and looked with delight on the great acreage devoted to the growing of flowers exclu-

sively, which are to furnish seed of "the best that grow." It is pleasant to think that the sun never sets on the gardens which are planted to flower seeds grown at Floradale.

The appearance of those acres in the month of June is as though they were covered with a great carpet, the colors harmonizing and ingeniously woven into the fabric.

Sweet Peas predominate. They are the poor man's orchid, because of the cheapness of the seed. At no place in the wide world is Sweet Pea seed produced of such fine quality as that grown in California. I shall refer again to this crop in a more specific manner. At this time I wish to record my impressions of some of the other flowers grown at Floradale. *Lathyrus latifolius*, as I never saw it grow before, either in richness of foliage, size of the clusters of flowers, and variety of colors, is used for a border plant along part of the public road through the farm. It is the perennial Pea, without fragrance, and hardy everywhere in the United States.

Bordering a driveway is a hedge of a single flowering species of *Dahlia* which is grown under the name *Purpurea*. It is a brilliant red, and like people of brilliant intellect attracts immediate attention. I do not find the name in any work at my command, and never saw it elsewhere. Other sorts of this flower are also grown in quantity because the tubers may be left in the ground the year around, and the plants seed abundantly.

A bed of *Verbenas*, 20 ft. wide, 1200 ft. long, mixed colors, was a gorgeous sight. Readers should always bear in mind when reading of Floradale that the rows of plants are 1200 ft. in length. The flowers on those plants are of immense size, and of pronounced colors. After *Verbenas* have attained to a certain degree of perfection they do not produce seed, therefore must be perpetuated by cuttings.

A bed of *Pentstemon gloxinoides* is a wonderful sight. Reds and soft shades of pink, the plants over 4 ft. tall, and so thickly set that it would be difficult for a bird to get through, and all in full bloom.

Dimorphotheca aurantiaca, Cape Marigold, appeared as if a great sheet of golden colored cloth 10 ft. wide had been spread across that field, dazzling in its beauty. The area devoted to this subject is more than twelve times the size of that which I looked upon five years ago.

The single flowering *Petunias*, which originated at Fordhook farms, Pennsylvania, are grown



A Floradale scene. *Dimorphotheca* (African Golden Orange Daisy) in the foreground

here because of the longer flowering season and the greater quantity of seed they will produce in this climate. They are of immense size, rich and varied in color. The delightful odor of the flowers fills the air as it blows across the field, and I was carried back in thought to the days of childhood when the same sort of perfume filled the air in my mother's garden.

California. The size of the bed is twenty-five times as large as the one I saw five years ago. I noticed several rows of a pure white flowering *Digitalis*. Two varieties of red California Poppies, known by the cognomens *Fireflame* and *Erecta*, were very spectacular in appearance.

Geranium seed, from varieties of their own originating, is produced in quantity because it is



Petunias at Floradale. From a photograph taken in July

African Marigold, *Tagetes erecta*, is grown here in greater perfection than I have ever seen it elsewhere in this country between the two oceans. Orange and lemon colored flowers of immense size, and wonderfully floriferous, yielding seed in abundance of the best quality. Another subject from the same country, grown here, is *Aretotis grandis*. Several rows, each the entire length of the field, are an interesting sight. The plant is a light green color, covered with a short tomentum. The flowers are large, the rays a light violet, the disk almost black. And what shall I say of the good old-fashioned *Scabiosa*. A perennial on this Coast, a bed of it 12 ft. wide, the plants 5 ft. tall and full of bloom, one is led to wonder where all the seed of this plant can be disposed of.

The two perennial *Centaureas*—*gymnocarpa* and *candidissima*—compose two lines of gray. Both species flower profusely and seed abundantly in this State; moreover they belong to the drought-resistant class of plants which do well during our dry season, without irrigation.

A bed of *Delphinium belladonna*, and one of *D. chinensis* were just coming into bloom; a month later they would be a sight worth going a long way to see. I have seen plants of the first named on this Coast that were 7 ft. tall, and all in bloom at once. There were also a fine lot of plants of the annual *Larkspur*.

Carnation seed is produced in quantity and, I was told, is equal in quality to any imported stock. Hollyhocks are perennials. They seem to have escaped a fungous disease of the foliage which disfigures the plant everywhere else in

of better quality than they can import from across the sea. Why should this not be so? The plant is a native of South Africa, which has a climate very similar to that of this Southland.

Now as to the Sweet Peas. They are grown by the acre. The first variety I inquired after was *Fiery Cross*, the new one, the world beater, at least so far as the cost of seed is concerned. A dollar and thirty-nine cents a seed would naturally lead one to wonder what sort of flower it must have been that led Burpee to pay the Scotch grower for the first three ounces he had for sale. There it was in all its glory, a rich fiery salmon color, and so well fixed in character that there was not a break in the entire planting; a bed 20x1200 ft. in extent, and most remarkable, it does not sunburn as does the majority of salmon-colored varieties. *Cherub* is another novelty, a beautiful shade of pink, the standard *picotee*-feathered. In my opinion it is the best of the class yet introduced. *Robert Sydenham* is a new salmon variety which sunburns unless grown under lath or in glass houses. For the cut flower grower of the Atlantic Coast it will be a decided acquisition. On this Coast no one ever thinks of growing a Sweet Pea plant under cover of any kind.

Norvic is the name applied to a white which, I must frankly say, is not, in my opinion, equal to *King White*. *Margaret Atlee* had the appearance of a double flower, so crinkled are the petals, and the color is an exquisite shade of pink. *Yarrowa* is another fine variety, variegated pink and white on a delicate cream ground.

The fellow who has the ability to conjure up



Sweet Peas at Burpee's Floradale Farm, Lompoc, Santa Barbara County, California. From a photograph taken in June



Flowers grown for seed at Floradale. It is pleasant to know that the sun never sets on the gardens which are planted to flower seeds grown at Floradale

names for all new varieties of Sweet Peas is a genius and no mistake. At present there are no less than 125 new sorts at Floradale on trial. Elimination by comparison will reduce the number for introduction to perhaps twenty-five.

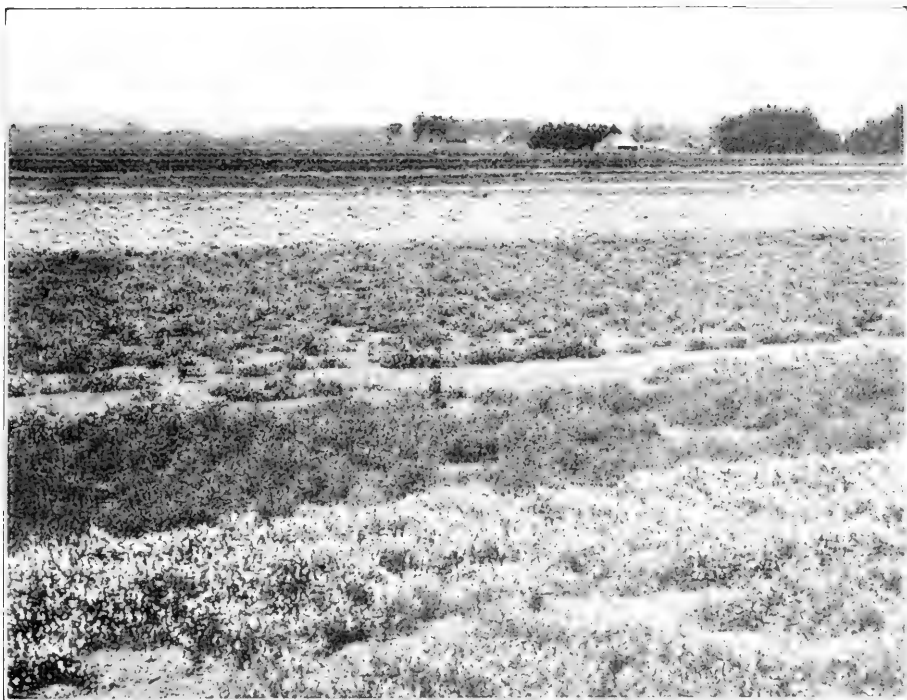
The development on this place during the past five years is a wonder. The area of land belonging to the firm has been doubled, a well of good water provided, and a pump driven by electric motor installed, that crops may be irrigated in case of a dry year. This season enough rain (24 in.) came that way to supply the crops without the artificial application of water. Implements of the most approved pattern for

preparing the ground and for planting, harvesting and threshing the seed, have been added to the equipment, and a fund of information acquired in the school of experience of growing seeds in that peculiar climate, which is one of the essentials to success.

The foundation on which all this is built was laid by Edwin Lonsdale who, because of ill health, has been obliged to rest. He had the wisdom to train two young men, the Buckman brothers, in a knowledge of the business of seed production, who will, by faithful service, maintain the Burpee reputation for high-grade seeds.



A panoramic view of Floradale showing the mountains in the distance. Some idea of the area cultivated may be had by comparing the ranch building at the left with the rest of the picture



Sweet Peas predominate. They are the poorman's orchid. At no place in the wide world is Sweet Pea seed produced of such fine quality as that grown in California

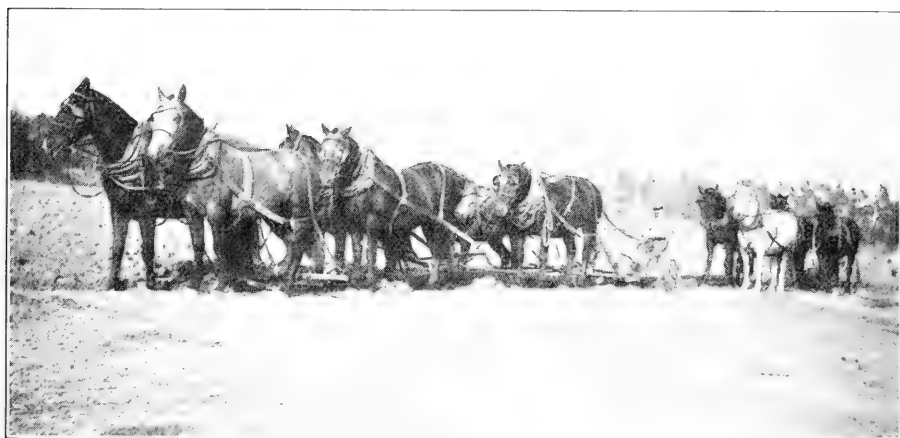


More Sweet Peas. The appearance of these acres in the month of June is as though they were covered with a great carpet, the harmonizing colors being ingeniously woven into the fabric

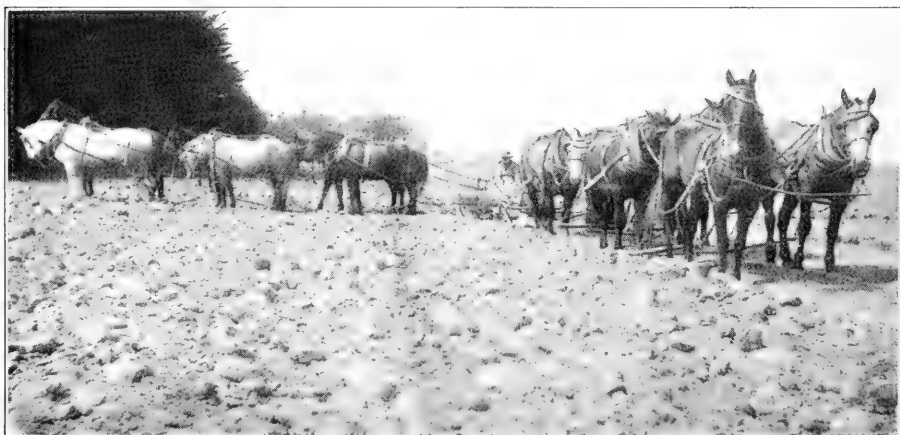
Plowing Scenes at Floradale



Six-horse team plowing, Floradale Farm, Spring, 1915



Five- and six-horse teams plowing, Floradale Farm



Two six-horse teams plowing with Benicia-Hancock disk plows, Floradale Farm

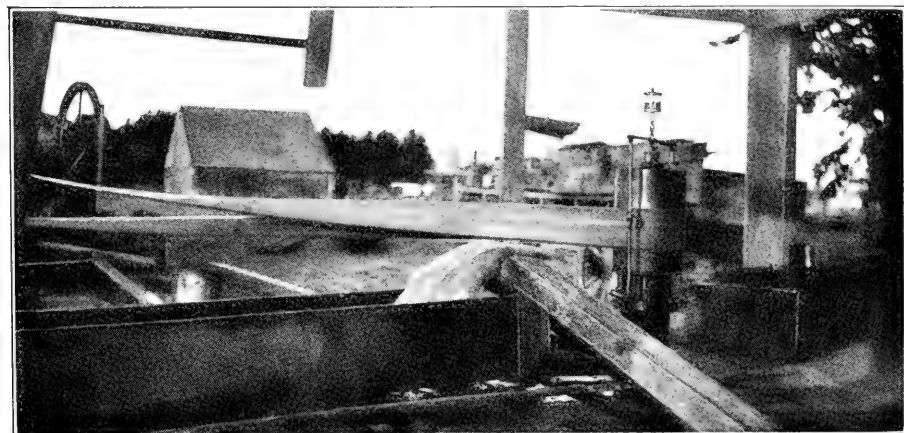
Modern Machinery at Floradale



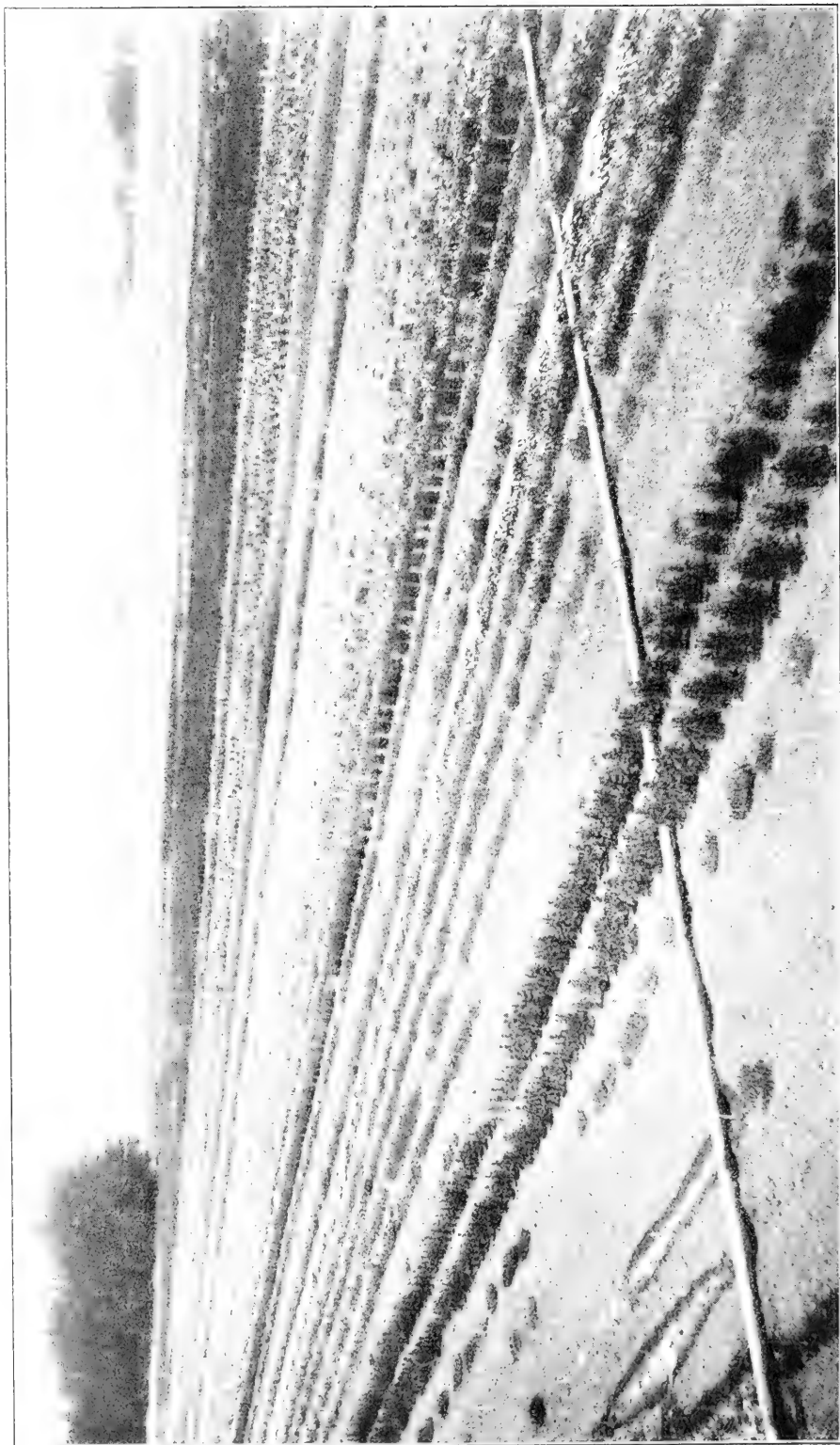
Plowing with caterpillar tractor at Floradale Farm. Spaulding deep-tilling machine in use



Spraying sweet peas, Floradale Farm



The irrigation system at Floradale Farm, showing pump engine at work, also discharge from 8-inch pipe



Bird's-eye view of a portion of Floradale Farm. From a photograph taken in June



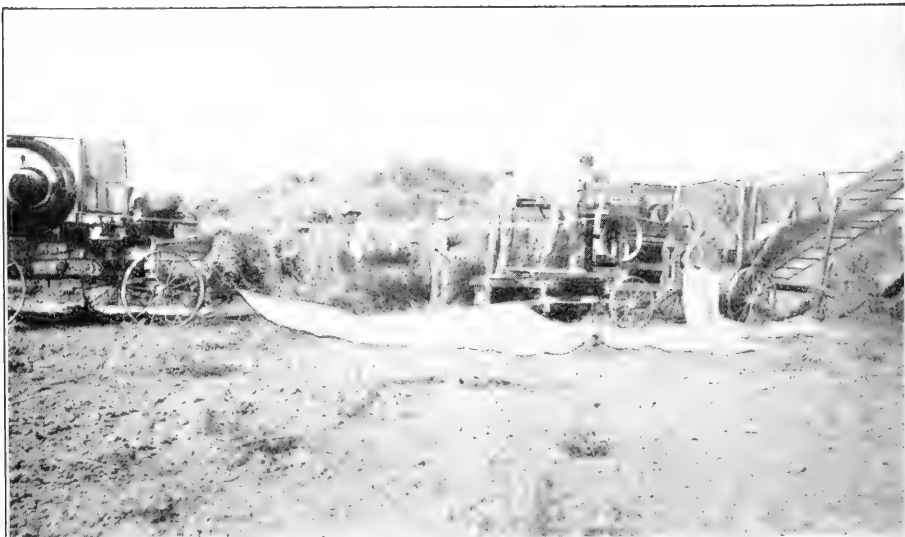
Greenhouses—Burpee's Floradale Farm, Lompoc, California

The Lompoc Valley is ten miles long and about half as wide. It is located on the coast, 172 miles north of Los Angeles, 303 miles south of San Francisco. At that particular point on this coast the word *pacific* is a misnomer. The contour of the land is such that the wind is more incessant and more violent than at any other place between the two cities named. As an evidence of the correctness of this statement, the beach at the entrance of the valley is piled high with driftwood. Lompoc is 93

ft. above sea level. The valley is enclosed by hills which are probably 200 ft. high, and these are the sides of the channel through which the sea breezes flow in volume, and with a velocity not met with elsewhere in southern California. Consequently, the atmosphere is more humid and the average annual temperature lower than elsewhere south of San Francisco; and because of these favorable climatic conditions Sweet Peas grow here to perfection, both in blossoms and seed.



Sweet Peas at Floradale ready to thresh. From a photograph taken in August



The illustration above shows the threshing of large lots of sweet peas at our Floradale ranch. Note the thresher is driven by a gasoline engine. The most modern machinery is used in every operation

The handling of sweet peas from the time of cutting to threshing is now reduced to a science, although great care must be exercised to avoid the many conditions that operate to offset all the care that has been taken in their growing.

Great squares of canvas are used for piling or stacking the vines so as to save all seed that may shatter. These vines are put through a huller or thresher, where all seeds are removed, cleaned and delivered. These seeds are again re-cleaned and in many instances hand-picked to insure the highest quality. Small lots are still threshed as shown in the lower picture.



Threshing small lots of sweet peas at Floradale. From an August photograph

Edwin Lonsdale

From Florists' Exchange



We regret to announce the death of Edwin Lonsdale, which occurred on Wednesday, Sept. 1, at the Naturopathic Institute, Los Angeles, Cal., after a long siege of illness. Edwin Lonsdale was born at Habberley, Shropshire, England, on Oct. 6, 1845, being brought up on his grandfather's farm of about 40 acres at Shenstone, part of

which was cultivated by his father. He was thus, from his earliest days, a tiller of the soil. He was educated in the public schools (his teacher, by the way, being a natural gardener), and he soon showed an aptitude for the work.

At the age of 12, after leaving school, he found work at Fotherley Hall gardens, later at Manley Hall gardens; still later he was employed in greenhouses where cut flowers and plants were grown for Covent Garden market. In July, 1869, he came to America, at first securing work on a farm and later obtaining a position in the greenhouse department of Thos. Meehan, at Germantown, Pa. In 1874 he went to California, working at first for Miller & Sievers, San Francisco, and later for Levi P. Saunderson, San José. A year later (1875) he returned to Philadelphia, starting in business for himself and then going into partnership with John Burton, at Wyndmoor. The partnership was dissolved in 1887, John Burton taking over the original six acres, and Mr. Lonsdale locating on the six acres adjoining.

In 1904 he gave up his business to accept a position as head of the horticultural department in Girard College, Philadelphia, being called in 1909 to go to California to establish and equip the great Floradale seed ranch of W. Atlee Burpee & Co., at Lompoc, Santa Barbara County. He was a Justice of the Peace and a school director in Wyndmoor, as well as an officer of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Florists' Club of Philadelphia, being also elected president of the S. A. F. and O. H. in 1895.

Edwin Lonsdale's work as a seed grower on the Pacific Coast has brought him promi-

nently before the trade, both in this country and abroad. The work he was called to undertake required a man of exceptional character and insight. It was no simple gardener's job to establish and operate a large farm on which the largest mail-order seed house in the world depended for certain of its crops, at least partially. His work as a grower and executor were above ordinary commendation.

In his home life he had several trials, two daughters having been drowned near Atlantic City years ago, and the third sole remaining child being taken away not long after by pneumonia.

His wife attended him through all the days of his sickness and survives him. Since he fell sick, W. Atlee Burpee himself did everything he could to encourage Mr. Lonsdale to keep up his spirits. They were closely drawn to each other, and undoubtedly the fine work that Edwin Lonsdale did in California was due not alone to his innate love of horticulture, but in part also to his regard for his employer.

Edwin Lonsdale filled a prominent part for the uplift of horticulture in his day; and while he will be mourned most by those who knew him best,

many indeed, who only knew him by name and reputation, will feel the loss which horticulture has suffered through his death.

The body was sent to Philadelphia for interment and was laid to rest in Ivy Hill Cemetery.



The late Edwin Lonsdale
First Manager of the Seed Farm of W. Atlee Burpee
& Co. at Lompoc, California

The House of Burpee realizes that the place once occupied by Edwin Lonsdale will be extremely difficult to fill. However, we will leave no stone unturned to carry forward the work so ably begun by the first manager of Floradale.

Many improvements, such as irrigation, plowing by motor tractors, power spraying machinery, etc., have been installed, so that we anticipate even greater things at Floradale.

Progress is our watchword. Only the best seeds that can be grown are offered in our Silent Salesman.



Fordhook Farms



THE *SUN* garden man was in Philadelphia last week and of course visited the celebrated Fordhook Farms. It was the intention to make the trip to Fordhook in the unconventional railway train. A call at the Burpee seed warehouse in Philadelphia resulted in a complete upset of all well-laid plans. All argument was unavailing, W. Atlee

Surely none but the wealthy can afford to make the trip frequently. Arriving at Fordhook, we first motored over the farms and then alighted to make a close inspection of the growing crops and the extensive trial beds. In these beds not only Burpee's seeds are tested, but seeds obtained from other sources for comparison of result.



The Office at Fordhook Farms, where records of trials and crops are kept. This little two-story building (nearly concealed by trees) was the original farmhouse at Fordhook. It was built about one hundred and thirty-three years ago, long before we entered the seed business, and when farmers and gardeners thought that they must save their own seeds to be sure of purity! At that time there was not a single seedsman, in anything like the modern sense, in America and but few in Europe. The seed trade is of modern evolution, and it is acknowledged that nowhere has more been done to inspire confidence in "bought seeds" than at Fordhook Farms, so famous as the largest trial grounds in America.

Burpee insisting that we accompany him in the automobile in which he makes his daily trips between the home farms and the office.

The trip was made through beautiful rolling country, the smooth roads lined with the magnificent park-like grounds of Philadelphia millionaires. It is historical ground practically the entire route, and as the distance from the city increases the solid old mansions built previous to Revolutionary times are frequently met and apparently are in as good condition as when they were built.

The old system of operating the roads by private enterprise is still in force, and we passed so many tollgates that count of them was lost.

in quality, size, season, color, vitality, &c. The trial grounds contain novelties that gardeners will be greatly interested in, chief of which is the Fordhook hybrid gladioli, flowering the first season from seeds. The flowers are as large as any of the older gladioli raised from bulbs, or more properly corms. The colors run from almost pure white and cream bordering closely on yellow through the various shades of red, both in solid colors and striped, to deep maroon and shades of blue.

A bedding plant that will prove of great value is a large-leaved, tall and robust coleus two feet or more in height. The leaves are several times as large as the older popular bedding coleus and

ie plants are much larger in circumference. he colors of the foliage are quite as varied as the old varieties. This variety will prove very useful for large beds and for centers of foliage beds edged with the old smaller varieties, the outer edge kept trimmed back closely to give a pyramidal effect on a flat ground surface. This does away with the necessity of bounding up the earth in the bed before planting. The advantage is that mounds dry out quicker than beds having a flat surface and therefore require more water, and unless carefully and frequently watered the earth is washed from the higher portions, making the gardener considerable trouble in keeping the beds in order. The flowers of the giant scarlet zinnias resemble the peony-flowered dahlias so closely that our parents, whose zinnias were always the pride of the garden, would not recognize the new varieties as zinnias. In size and form they are more like dahlias than zinnias, while the foliage of the plants is attractive and the form of the plant graceful, a very decided improvement over the old varieties.

A beautiful pot plant almost unknown to most gardeners was found in the Fordhook greenhouses, the fuchsia-flowered tuberous begonia. Gardeners who grow tuberous begonia will find this a great acquisition.

The collie kennels and runs were full of barking, frolicking dogs, and the poultry yards filled with pure-bred stock.

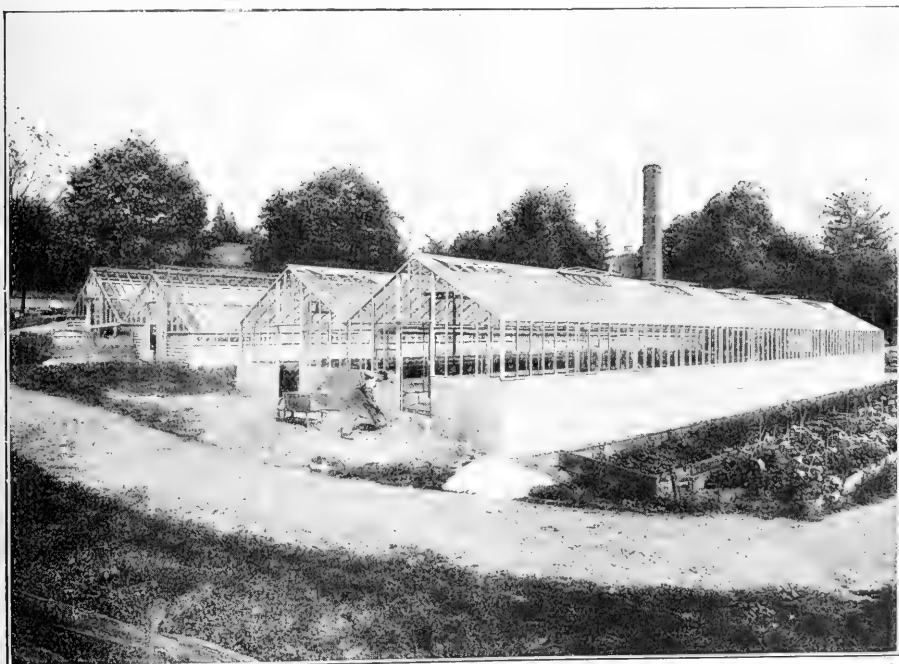
The dinners served at Fordhook are quite in keeping with the general manner in which the

farm is conducted. Judging from the variety of vegetables and fruits served, everything in the trial beds was sampled, and while their appearance in the bed was most inviting, the quality proved by actual test, in this case, that appearance not always is deceiving.

An appointment with friends in the city that evening was overcome by the hospitality of our host—and we remained at Fordhook. One thing lacking there is quite noticeable, and that is the proverbial latchstring. The front door is always open, so the latchstring is not required.

After dinner the guests scatter about the rambling old Colonial house. The neighbors drop in for a visit and tell of the peach orchard, some two hundred acres, a short distance from Fordhook. The trees are just coming into bearing, and the first crop will run somewhere around eight to ten thousand bushels. Prof. Washburn, from the farm school, entertained with a talk on soils and fertilizers.

Some of the guests leave as the hour grows late, but it seems as though a multitude remain to be more comfortably cared for than at Philadelphia's best hotels. In the morning breakfast is served in the breakfast room overlooking the beautiful valley and rolling hills beyond. All are urged to remain, and although it was solemnly agreed to leave promptly at 8 o'clock for an early start to the city it is half past 9 before we board the car and motor back to town. That day is gone! But the memory of a visit to Fordhook will linger long.



The greenhouses at Fordhook, October 1, 1910. In these greenhouses and adjoining frames samples of every lot of seeds are tested for vitality. Young plants of certain vegetables and flowers are also started for setting out in the fields

Buying seeds must be entirely a matter of confidence.

Every truck-patch, large or small, is the planter's "trial ground."

We desire that our seeds and not your patience shall be tried there.



The lower range of greenhouses at Fordhook. Many trials of Peppers, Egg Plants, etc., have been "potted up" and will soon be ready for setting out



Another view of the lower range of greenhouses at Fordhook. We annually grow thousands of Begonia, Coleus, Heliotrope, Petunia, and other tender annual plants inside for setting out in frames and fields later on



The Seed Industry

Its History and Development



Reprinted from "The Booster; or Pennsylvania at The World's Panama Pacific Exposition." Published by *The Courier*, Bristol, Pa.

Philadelphia is recognized as the oldest and perhaps the foremost seed market in America. More than a century and a quarter ago there was established in Philadelphia the original Landreth seed business. This was founded by David Landreth and has

Go where you will, visit any seed concern, and in almost every one you will find a man who at some time or other in his career has had a portion of his training in Philadelphia. So that while being the oldest and also the leading seed market of America, Philadelphia and



the potting-shed at Fordhook. The men are potting pepper and other vegetable plants for setting out in the fields to produce seed

passed down through generation after generation to the present day. The firm is now located in Bristol, Pa., and enjoys the distinction of being a member of an organization of century-old concerns.

Eastern Pennsylvania has contributed much more than the several firms who have engaged in the seed business. Men trained in her many establishments have gone out to all sections of the country. These trained men have been in great demand by seed concerns in various sections. Some have gone to the Agricultural Department in Washington, others have engaged in the seed business for themselves, while others have given their knowledge and effort to build up other organizations in the same line.

Pennsylvania have left their mark on all sections where the seed industry has been developed to any considerable extent.

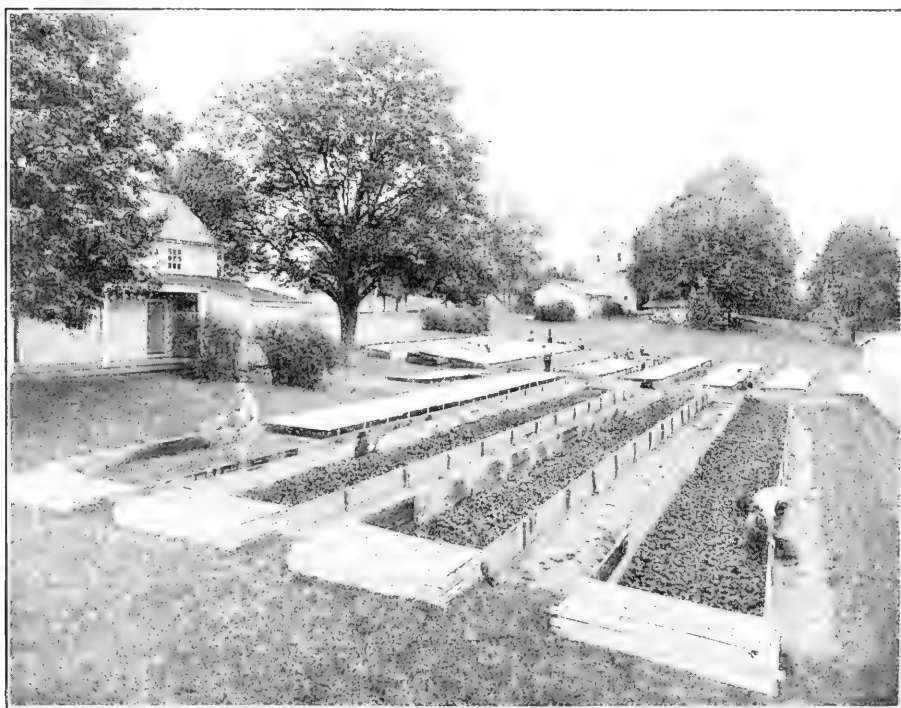
Philadelphia has more successful concerns engaged in the seed business than any other city in the United States, regardless of size. Such firms as Landreth, Burpee, Buist, Dreer, Maule, Michell, Johnson, Stokes, Moore, Simon, Ely, Waterer and Mingle all enjoy splendid businesses built up along individual lines.

The Henry A. Dreer business, founded many years ago, has grown to be one of the world's largest nursery and seed concerns.

Robert Buist built up one of the most successful businesses in Philadelphia and died a very wealthy man.



Frames to the south of the lower range of greenhouses
Here are raised many seedlings for transplanting to the fields



Frames north of the greenhouses. From a photograph taken in May

Wm. Henry Maule developed a great business as a mail-order seedsman, and since his death the business has been conducted by an organization of his former associates and is to-day known as Wm. Henry Maule, Inc.

In the house of Burpee, Philadelphia has the world's greatest mail-order seed business. This

concern spares no expense to give the best service possible. The thousands of trials, made for the sole purpose of knowing the character of every stock sold, as well as the vitality, enables the house of Burpee to sell only the best seeds of known quality.

An inspection of the great warehouses in



A portion of the Trial Grounds at Fordhook. The different seed samples have been sown and many plants are showing above the soil

wonderful business has been built about a single idea of right service and a direct deal between grower and planter.

In order to describe to our readers the growth of the seed industry, we have singled out the firm of W. Atlee Burpee & Co., briefly describing the methods and operations which have made this firm such a success.

W. Atlee Burpee & Co. was established in 1876 by W. Atlee Burpee, whose broad-minded personality is alone responsible for the development of a business from a very modest beginning to a vast organization, owning its own farms in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and California, and employing hundreds of men and women.

Thousands of acres in many countries contribute their share to the enormous stocks of seed handled by the house of Burpee.

It is said that this concern sends its crop inspectors into sections that aggregate more than thirty thousand miles of travel each year. This is merely a detail of this ideal service which becomes even more apparent when one considers this house does not send a single mile to solicit in order.

A trip to Fordhook Farms, America's greatest trial grounds, convinces the visitor that this

Philadelphia shows hundreds of employees busy on the thousands of orders that come in daily in season. The latest equipment in machinery furnishes accuracy in detail in the matter of packing the seeds, while bright, cheery quarters contribute their share in giving Burpee service to the many thousands of customers.

Every comfort is provided for the workers—rest rooms, reading rooms, all the latest magazines and papers, a dining room where a lunch of the best quality may be purchased for a few cents, umbrellas in case of rain, first aid if accidents occur, are just a part of the service building policy.

W. Atlee Burpee & Co. have customers in almost every country in the world. In 1914 they distributed more than a million catalogs, which in itself required an outlay of \$30,000 to \$35,000 for postage alone. These catalogs required almost half a million pounds of paper.

This concern maintains a printing plant that prints millions of seed bags, labels, etc.

The machines that fill and seal the packets are almost human in their precision and much faster than hand work.

Many articles have been written about this business, but none is better than the tribute of

the late Elbert Hubbard when he wrote in "The Fra": "If there is any one man in America, more than another, who is making the waste places green and the desert to blossom like the rose, that man is W. Atlee Burpee, seedsman magnus, gentleman superbus."

So that we of Pennsylvania are justly proud of the development of the seed business; we are

proud of America's oldest seed establishment; we are proud of the world's greatest mail-order seed business, for we recognize that agriculture is the fundamental source of all wealth; and realizing the very important part played by the seedsman, we are proud to be recognized as one of the leading States in this great business of seeds.



Lettuce trials at Fordhook, a June photograph

A CORDIAL INVITATION. Planters who may visit Philadelphia are invited to inspect the Burpee Buildings, where we shall be pleased to explain the workings of the various departments. We are glad, also, during spring, summer, and autumn, to have our customers examine the crops and trials at Fordhook Farms. Wednesday is "Visitors' Day," but customers from a distance can obtain permits at our Philadelphia office for any other weekday. There is no other place in America where such a complete assortment of all varieties can be seen growing each season



A panoramic view of the main portion of the Trial Grounds at Fordhook. Many large trials, such as Cabbage, Peas, Beans, Corn, Squashes, Pumpkins and other crops that require large area, are conducted in other sections of the farm. In the distance at the top of the hill may be seen "The Woods." Immediately below this woods are located the poultry yards and kennels



The early trials of cabbages at Fordhook. From a photograph taken in June
 In order to verify our early trials, two separate trials are made, one early and one late. If any undue advantage is to be had by reason of different seasons it is shown up in one or the other of these trials



The late trials of cabbages (in a different field from the above) as they appeared at Fordhook, taken in October



From the Atlantic to the Pacific Burpee's FORDHOOK FARMS are famous as the largest Trial Grounds in America

The illustration to the left gives a general view, looking northeast, of the main portion of the Trial Grounds at Fordhook

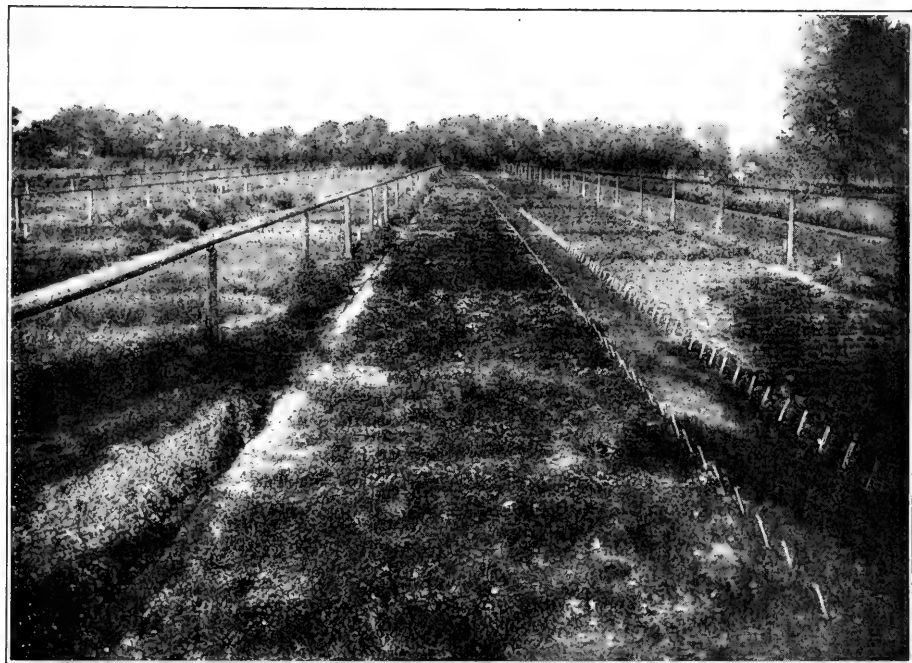
From the Atlantic

Professor Johnson, of "The American Agriculturist," performed a similar office on behalf of the members of the agricultural and horticultural press present. Mr. Johnson said that the day had been one rare treat. . . . In speaking of the immensity of the trial grounds at FORDHOOK, Professor Johnson stated that those present would take home a lesson which would be remembered for many years. **There was not an experiment station in the United States, supported by State or national legislation, that had anything like the variety of tests that were conducted on the Fordhook Farms.** He said this is all fairness to the splendid work of the experiment stations. . . .

—*Extract from an Editorial account of "A FIELD DAY AT FORDHOOK," which appeared in "The Florists' Exchange," New York.*

From the Pacific

A careful seedsman's experiment grounds, like yours, it seems to me, are far more useful than any of the colleges or public experiment stations, as it is all practical work. **Your Fordhook Trial Grounds were the best of all my Eastern object-lessons, and I had many of them. I had no idea of their extent and value, not only to yourself, but to every one of your customers, and eventually to every one who cultivates the soil.**—*Thus wrote LUTHER BURBANK, "The Wizard of Horticulture," from Santa Rosa, California, upon his return from an extended Eastern trip.*



Pansy trials at Fordhook. From an October photograph

These old favorites are always greatly admired by all visitors to Fordhook. Pansies, as may be indicated by the number of seed trials here, are a leading specialty: 176 are on trial for purity of stock and value of variety. Not that there are that number of distinct varieties, but, wherever obtainable, seed is secured and tried out, and in this way only the very best is kept in stock for our trade



A portion of the trials of annuals



Beet and carrot trials at Fordhook. From a June photograph

Beet and carrot trials are conducted on the hilltop, where same may be planted early, because the nature of the soil admits of the roots penetrating easily and the frost leaves earlier here than it does below, where the soil is more or less tenacious in its character. These important vegetables occupy a large area at Fordhook each year. Careful notes are made covering all variations and characteristics



Another field of early cabbage trials at Fordhook



Beet and carrot trials made during 1915

Every variation in color of leaf or root, height of growth, shape of leaves, in fact every characteristic, is recorded. These notes made year after year are the signs by which we know that every stock is true in all respects. Until they are proved, the seeds are never packed. Fordhook Farms must place the seal of approval before the seeds are sent out



The onion trials, Summer of 1915



A partial view of the trials of annual flowers. The same care in making notes on flowers as in notes on vegetables insures the finest strains that can be grown



A partial view of the trials of perennials



Early trial of lettuce at Fordhook, shown above in Trial Grounds view. A second trial of lettuce is made later in the season so that we may prove that under different conditions the strains will hold up to their varietal characteristics

The illustration below shows the sweet pea trials at Fordhook. Sweet peas have long been a leading specialty with the House of Burpee, our firm having been among the first to take this popular annual in hand. We have developed and introduced many of the best varieties in cultivation to-day. We have prepared a special book on sweet peas entitled "Sweet Peas Up-to-Date." All lovers of these charming flowers should have this book. Thousands of trials are made each year, and novelties are here proved in order that we may retain our title of "American Headquarters for Sweet Peas"





Inspecting the irrigating system in main Trial Grounds at Fordhook. One of the illustrations in "The Florists' Exchange," New York, July 2, 1910

Fordhook is visited by many interested persons each year. Many of the greatest agricultural and horticultural experts and authorities have honored us and all have been unanimous in their praise of the thorough methods and practice at Fordhook. The groups shown in these pictures are visiting Seedsmen, delegates to the Convention of the American Seed Trade Association



Inspecting trials of grasses and forage plants. From "The Florists' Exchange," July 2, 1910



W. Atlee Burpee & Co.



The man who can look upon the seeds and tell which will grow and which will not is one of the world's benefactors. Mankind at no time has more than eight months' provisions ahead. Should all the crops of the earth fail in a single season, or should all our farmers become possessed with a spirit of improvidence and fail to keep

and the enthusiasm of the founder of the House of Burpee. At the seed farms and experimental stations located at Fordhook, Pa., Sunnybrook, N. J., and Floradale, Cal., every man is made to feel that his work is important to the ultimate success of the business. Every one gets some of Mr. Burpee's enthusiasm and the result is a splen-



The Advertising Department. Here are prepared the advertisements that are printed in many magazines. Records of magazine returns are kept here; also a complete file of all the magazines used

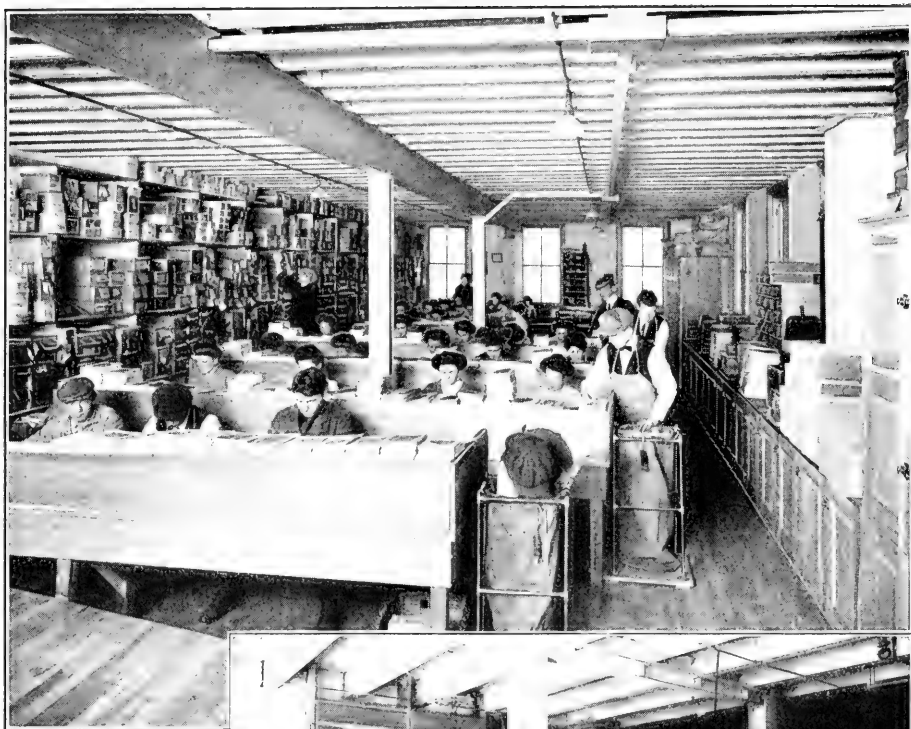
a stock of seed for the next planting-time civilization would be swept out of existence in less than a year.

In the warehouse of the W. Atlee Burpee Company, at Fifth and Buttonwood Streets, is stored in embryo the sustenance of a large portion of the earth's inhabitants, the latent energy that drives the world's commerce and industries.

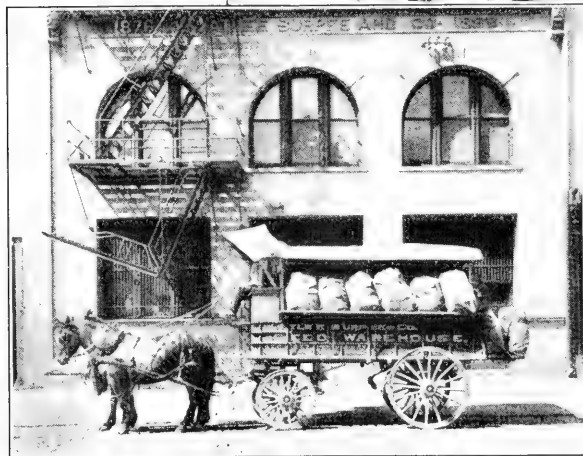
Starting with a modest business in 1876, the House of Burpee has grown into the greatest mail-order seed house in the world. Like many other Philadelphia enterprises this establishment is of international importance. Mr. Burpee will tell you that he has built up this great business by advertising, and to a great extent this is so, but back of it all has been the integrity

and the enthusiasm of the founder of the House of Burpee. At the seed farms and experimental stations located at Fordhook, Pa., Sunnybrook, N. J., and Floradale, Cal., every man is made to feel that his work is important to the ultimate success of the business. Every one gets some of Mr. Burpee's enthusiasm and the result is a splen-

didly organized machine—a business that is constantly growing, and growing upon the most solid basis that it is possible to put under any business; namely, confidence in the quality of the products turned out. Burpee's seeds grow; this fact is known the world over, and it is not by any chance that this is brought about. Naturally, the Burpee farms could not raise a hundredth part of the seeds the firm sells. Contracts for the growing of seeds are given out two and three years ahead of selling dates. These crops, located in different parts of the world where the finest results are obtainable, are carefully watched by the Burpee house and reports made of their condition and development. Unless they are fully "Burpee

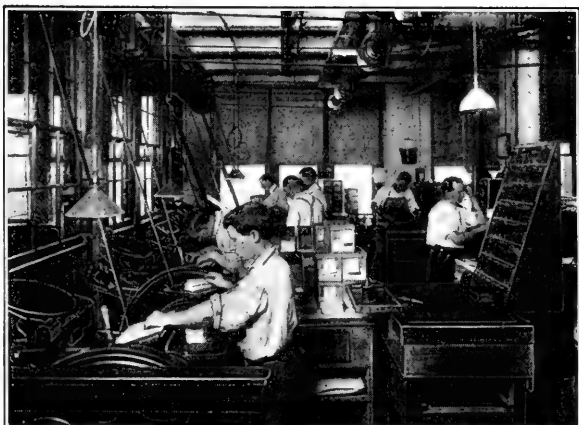


Mailing Burpee's Annual, of which the first edition each year is more than 550,000 copies. Two inspectors from the post office are present daily during the mailing, and the mail sacks are routed and dispatched direct from the Burpee buildings to the different railways, thus saving all handling in the Philadelphia post office

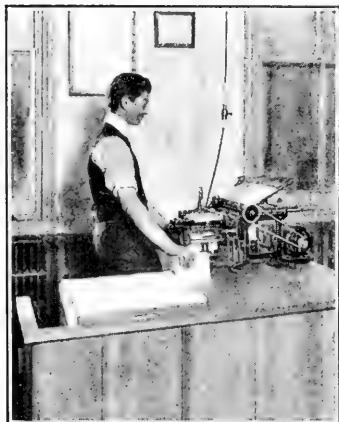


Ready to mail. These mail sacks contained more than twenty-seven thousand (27,596) copies of Burpee's Annual, mailed on that one day. The illustration to the left shows a wagon load of mail leaving the York Street side of the Burpee buildings. Some idea of the extent of our business may be had from the fact that in 1915 the editions—for Winter and Spring—of our seed catalogs totaled one million ninety-four thousand (1,094,325) copies. Besides these catalogs there were distributed millions of circulars and many thousand copies of our instructive leaflets on culture, making in all the greatest output of original literature on horticulture ever circulated in a single season by any one house in the world

The printing department shown in the illustration to the right is a very busy part of the Burpee business. Many small or "rush" jobs are here handled with a speed and care that would be wellnigh impossible if these same jobs were sent out to a regulation printshop



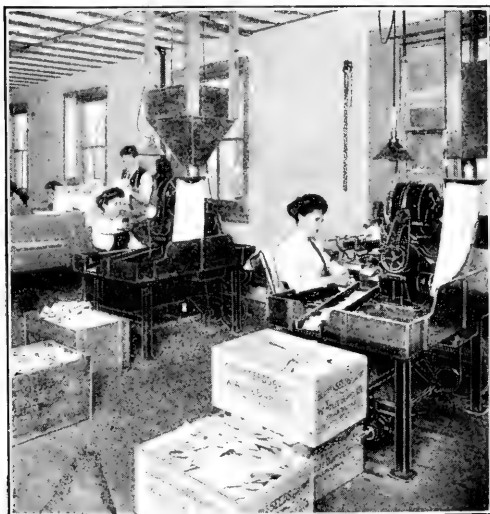
The printing room. Here are printed millions of bags and small circulars. The catalogs and books are printed now, as they have been for more than thirty-five years, by Wm. F. Fell Co., Philadelphia



This illustration shows the folding machine on which are folded not only order sheets but hundreds of thousands of Leaflets on Culture. These are distributed free with orders upon request. Nearly every question you can ask on culture is answered in one of our special leaflets



The Vegetable Seed Stock Ledger, shown above, is kept on the fourth floor, so as to be convenient for the charges made from the bulk seed stored on the upper floors of the original Burpee building and in the warehouse on the south. A ledger account is kept with each variety of seed, and at any time we can tell just what stock was used to fill a given order. A similar stock ledger is kept with flower seeds, but this is kept in the flower seed department on the second floor



The packing machines

The ingeniously constructed and delicately adjusted machines for measuring seeds and putting them in sacks of all sizes, sealing the sacks and counting them into boxes placed there to receive them, are marvels of labor-saving devices, without which so large a business as is done here in a season could not be transacted by five times the number of present employees—over three hundred in the height of the season

Standard" in quality the entire crop is rejected. Even after the seeds are delivered in bulk to the Burpee warehouses, thorough tests are made before they are packed for retail and wholesale selling.

A sample of each lot of seed thus produced is shipped to the Burpee farms and the firm's personal trials made. The crop must be pure, sturdy, full of vitality, true to the strain. Nine times out of ten results confirm the original grower's statement. But if a bad streak does develop, the seed is discarded.

By the stock number originally given the seed it can be traced throughout the establishment.

Mr. Burpee knows all that it is humanly possible for anyone to know about the mystery of the seed from the moment that it is gathered until it is placed in the package and sent to its destination. When a man, it matters not in what part of the world he may be, receives his little consignment of seed, upon which is dependent his next season's crop and his livelihood and that of his family, the name of Burpee on the package inspires him with confidence in a successful crop.

carefully, the proper seed numbers noted, and the clerks then go along the rows of racks and assemble the seeds required. Each order is checked twice, for there must be no mistakes. The order may come from South Africa, it may have been a month since the customer has written and it may be another month before he receives the seed, and a mistake could not be rectified in time for the planting season. Upward of four thousand orders are received every day, practically all of them containing remittances from twenty-five cents to a hundred dollars or more, and every order, if possible, is filled before the close of business on the day it is received. In the busy seasons it takes over three hundred people working steadily to handle the orders.

In describing the methods of keeping the record of the seeds, an article appearing in the *Florists' Exchange* a few years ago included the following description:

The bookkeeping, which term naturally includes the system adopted for the handling of the mail orders as well as for the ledgers which record the heavier items of the business, is conducted on a wonderful system, geared and closely



Packing and sealing the popular "Seeds that Grow." The illustration above, from photograph, shows a portion of one of our seed-papering rooms on the third floor. Here, by the deft hands of willing women workers, and with the aid of seed-papering machines run by electric power, millions of retail packets, ounces, quarter pounds, pints, and quarts are neatly prepared. Pecks and bushels (sealed with our leaden seal) are filled by men on another floor

The same thoroughness and completeness of method that is applied in the production of the seed is carried out in their distribution. The different seeds are sealed in paper packets and distributed in racks which bear the name of the variety of seed and its designated number. The orders as they come in are gone over

interwoven the one into the other like the works of a first-class watch, so that but a moment is required to ascertain any item in connection with any transaction whatsoever, the detail work being recorded so minutely that it is possible to tell at a glance, for instance, the vitality test and who grew, say, the Parsley seed purchased

by John Smith, of Prescott, Ariz., a month or a year previous.

From the sets of books dedicated to stocks on hand may be ascertained at any moment the vitality test, the quantity of a certain stock received from the Burpee farm on which it was raised, or the different growers from whom it was procured, the amount sold, and the quantity remaining on hand, together with the number of packets and subdivisions of ounces, pounds, sacks, etc., into which it has been divided for retail and wholesale trade. And so on throughout the entire system of bookkeeping.

In days of old, members of the royal families numbered among their court attaches gardeners who devoted all their time to growing such delicacies as were thought fit to grace the king's table, and rare flowers to adorn the royal gardens. W. Atlee Burpee is the world's gardener. Thanks to the energy and the skill of this man, the most luscious fruits and vegetables are brought within the reach of everyone, and many beds of beautiful flowers grace gardens, rich or humble, in practically every quarter of the earth.

The House of Burpee has done much to spread the fame of Philadelphia and Philadelphia enterprise throughout the world.



A corner in the storage-room. Here are stored filled packets, ounces, quarter-pound, half-pound, pound, pint and quart sealed packages by the hundreds of thousands

Below is shown one of the Bulk Warehouses, York Avenue below the main Burpee Buildings

We are Specialists in Seeds

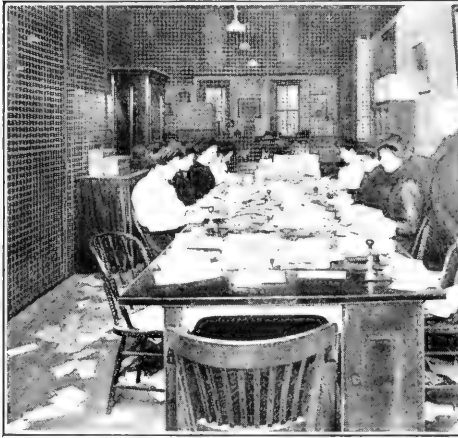
Our entire attention is devoted to producing and distributing **Seeds**.— **Seeds only and only Seeds of the Best Quality.** We aim to do *this one thing well*,—consequently do not handle plants, small fruits, nursery stock, nor other kindred lines,—such as fertilizers, implements, and poultry supplies. We shall be pleased to have your order for Seeds and *know* that we can serve you well! We shall be pleased also to give any advice in our power as to your other horticultural requirements.

At the **BURPEE BUILDINGS** we are glad to welcome customers who may have occasion to visit Philadelphia and to extend also an invitation to inspect our Pennsylvania, New Jersey and California Farms during the growing season. There is nothing to conceal in our business, and it is always a pleasure to show everything of interest, both in the city warehouses and on our farms.



W. ATLEE BURPEE & Co.

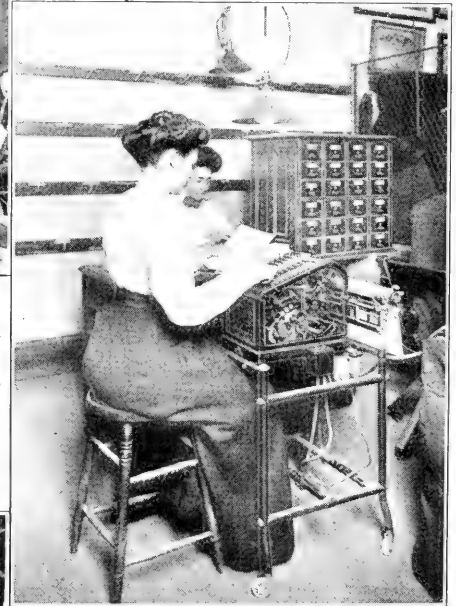
Busy Days at the Home of "Seeds That Grow"



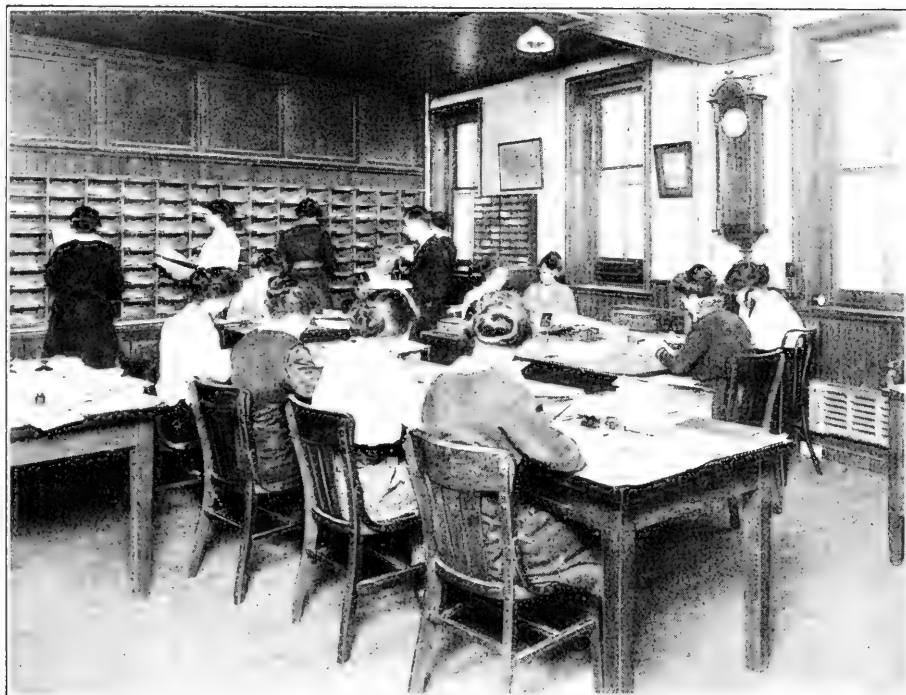
Opening the Mail

The method of taking care of mail orders is an interesting one to follow from the moment when an order is received until ready to leave the building by mail, express or freight. Cut into the table in front of the cashier and each assistant are three slits for remittances, one each for stamps, checks and money orders. The slits lead to large cans, which are emptied later in the day. The amount each envelope contained is carefully marked on the accompanying order slip, which later finds its way to an adding machine, where the totals of the orders must tally with the remittances taken from the boxes

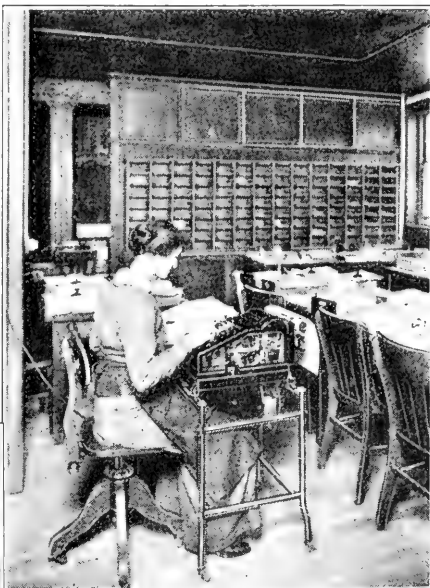
Each day the mails bring between three and seven thousand orders. And a day's work in the cashier's registry and order department is the mail of that particular day, which is prepared for filling and shipping next day. A rule of the business, rarely broken, is that an order must be shipped within 24 hours of its receipt. Ten cashiers were opening the mails the morning the party visited the establishment



Portion of the Main Office. These clerks are engaged in entering the number and amount of the orders on the cards



Assorting orders by States as received from the mail room. These orders are then booked by States, the post-offices being arranged alphabetically by the card system. This segregation by States allows the use of addressing machines, as shown in the picture below. Greater speed and accuracy are obtained by the use of these machines. The address cards are much easier read when so addressed than when written by hand. We provide the latest and most accurate machinery so as to render the best possible seed-service.



The machine shown in the illustration above is an "arithmometer," or adding machine. These machines are almost indispensable in a business where accuracy and speed are required.





In the illustration to the left is shown the accounting and bookkeeping department. Here are handled all charge orders; credits are passed; accounts opened and charged, and all clerical work in connection with such orders is performed

The illustration to the right shows a stenographer typing letters which had been previously dictated into a dictaphone. Most of the letters are answered by dictating to stenographers who take down in shorthand, but for certain forms of correspondence the machine here shown greatly facilitates speedy and accurate work



The stenographers at the typewriters in a light, airy room adjoining the main office. We never annoy customers with "follow-up" letters, but are always prompt to answer any inquiries either for special quotations or further information as to varieties or culture

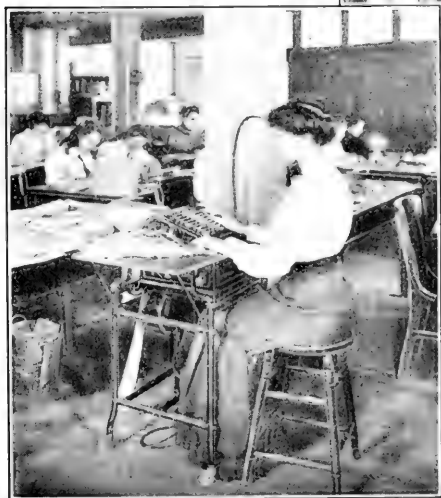


The illustration to the left shows clerks addressing bags for the Burpee Annual to daily applicants. Frequently thousands of applications are received in one day. The Burpee Annual, while free to all, is never mailed unsolicited, except to customers of record

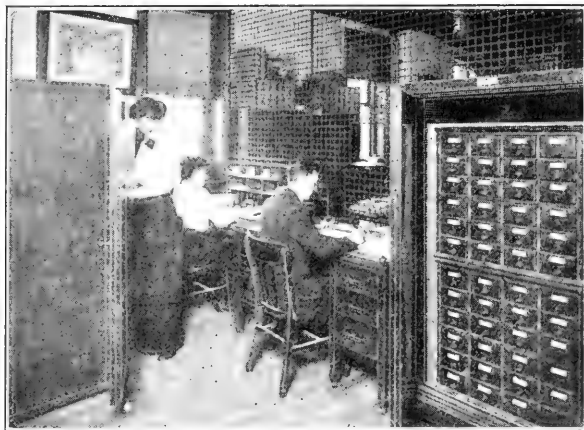
The view at the right shows the Bureau of Adjustment. Here is handled such correspondence as may arise between customers and ourselves covering shipments or such other matters as require letters of explanation



The lower picture to the right shows another stenographers' row. Many letters covering cultural information, quotations, etc., are written by the typists. All the machines are placed in good light



The young lady at the left is operating an adding machine, and in her work verifies the amounts entered on the order sheets. These machines are mechanically accurate; errors are practically impossible



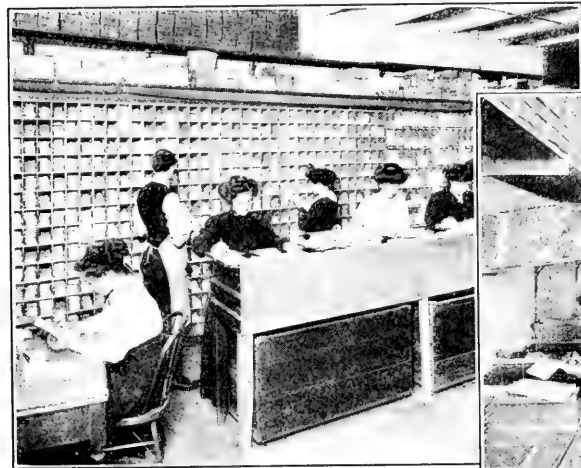
Interior views. The illustration to the left shows two clerks booking freight and express orders. Orders for seeds that are to go by freight or express are sorted from the orders to go by mail, given a different set of numbers, and filled on the fourth floor of the Burpee Buildings entirely separate from the mail orders, which are filled on the second floor. An acknowledgment by mail is made of all freight and express orders the day they are received



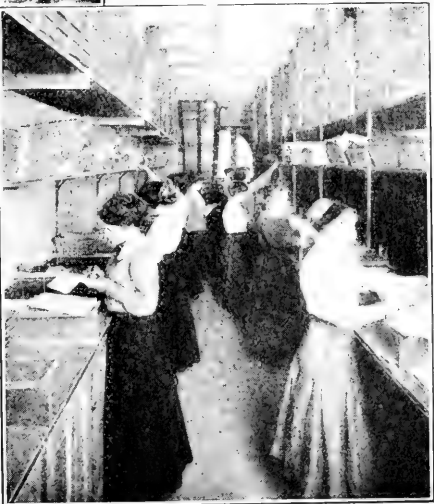
An aisle in the Vegetable mail-order department. In this department no seeds in bulk are kept at all. All packages are done up in advance and the girls can pick them out of the various compartments readily and without any possibility of getting the wrong seed, which might happen did they go to bulk drawers. We use every known safeguard that constant care and ample capital can secure to reduce to a minimum the possibility of mistakes



Here is shown a row of order desks in the Vegetable Mail-order Department. Each order clerk is provided with a desk where she may assemble and arrange in baskets the orders that come to her for filling. The baskets are in turn passed to the checkers, where all orders are double-checked. This method of double-checking reduces the possibility of error to a minimum, and while costly it gives the satisfaction of having rendered the best possible service



The illustration above shows another time-saving duplicate department where orders for packets amounting only to one dollar or less are filled



The illustration immediately above shows an aisle of order desks in the mail-order department on the second floor



This illustration to the left shows the making ready of cardboard boxes which come in flat and are then shaped to hold the packets and packages of seed to be filled in the mail-order department. Many thousands are required and this work is done before the busy season begins

This illustration to the right shows one side of a checking-table at which ten checkers work in pairs facing each other. All our energies are directed to filling mail orders, and considering promptness and accuracy in executing your commands, together with quality of seeds, you cannot be served better anywhere

Mr. A. T. De LA MARE, the editor of "The Florists' Exchange," New York, after a personal visit of inspection, wrote: A word as to the employees, the great majority of whom are young women. It would seem as though the Burpee firm had in their employ all the good-looking young women of Philadelphia; possibly the reason for this consists in the fact that they are treated not only with the greatest courtesy by the heads of departments, but that their wellbeing in work hours is carefully provided for. On the third floor of the building, facing on three streets, is a large airy dining and rest room, provided expressly for these young women, and here they lunch in comfort and at cost price. Racks for both men and women are provided wherein they can store their street clothes and keep them under lock and key. Large toilet rooms, neat as a new pin, are to be found on every floor.

The dining and rest rooms are shown below





The upper illustration shows a packing-table in the mail-order department. After being checked correctly, the packages of seeds (each order in a separate basket) are made into suitable bundles or boxes, then tied and passed on for weighing and stamping, as shown in lower picture



Views in the flower seed department. The aisle shown in the illustration is in the bulk or wholesale division of the flower seed department. Here is kept bulk flower seed, and all orders for large quantities are handled here



The picture above shows order clerks engaged in filling orders in the mail-order division of the flower seed department. Desks are provided here the same as in the vegetable seed department



The illustration above shows the order and assembling tables in the wholesale division of the flower seed department. We use very delicate and accurate scales, as many varieties of flower seeds are exceedingly valuable and great care is demanded. The illustration to the right shows the double-checking desks in the flower seed department



Checking orders for flower seeds



Children's garden packets have become so popular with all our young friends that the department shown in the picture below, and which is located upon the third floor, is devoted entirely to filling the orders for these special children's packets

The illustration above shows a corner where are filled many of the orders for special varieties of packet seeds offered in our advertisements



The picture to the left shows a part of the checking desks in the wholesale department. Here also is shown a portion of the tags that are held, already printed with names and addresses, so as to avoid any errors in directing and shipping. No detail is too small in the Burpee's business. Our aim is to render the best possible service

The illustration to the right shows a portion of the wholesale department. The reason why Burpee's Seeds are not sold more generally at wholesale is because of their necessarily higher cost. We never send out travelers to solicit orders either at wholesale or retail. We do supply, however, quite a number of the better class of dealers, but only with seeds in sealed packages. In other words, Burpee's Seeds are sold in any quantity, but only under seal





At the left is a corner in the wholesale department. Here the clerical work necessary in filling and directing wholesale orders is done. Tags and address cards for a large list of regular customers are printed before the busy season. This facilitates the rapid filling and correct dispatch of such orders

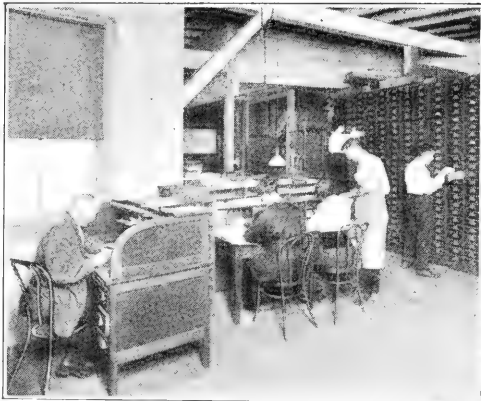
At the right is a view of the root cellar. Here are kept potatoes, onion sets, rhubarb and horseradish roots, etc. The lower picture shows a field of gladioli growing at Fordhook. These bulbs are dug in the fall and shipped to our Philadelphia warehouses for use in filling orders, as shown on page 71





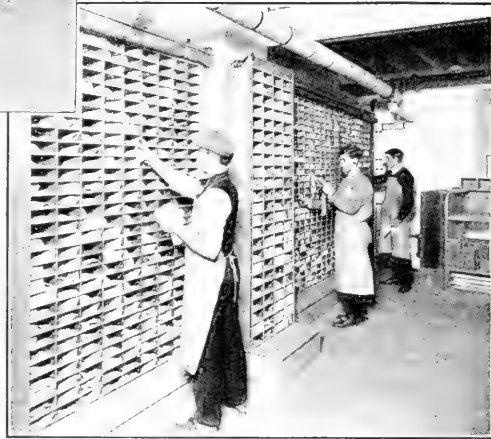
A part of the bulb cellars. Here are stored the roots of Cannas, Dahlias, Tritomas, Incarvilleas, and the bulbs of Begonias, Lilies, Tuberoses, Gladioli, and many other summer-flowering varieties. As the bulbs come in from the farms they are carefully stored in sliding racks that afford ideal storage conditions. The illustration below is the order-filling room of the Bulb Department, where men only are employed





Much clerical work must be performed in connection with orders even after the preliminary work done in the main offices. The desks shown in the illustration to the left are located in the freight and express department on the fourth floor and are devoted to the clerical work of that department.

The illustration to the right shows the flower seed case on the fourth floor. Here is carried a duplicate stock of all flower seeds in packets for convenience in filling freight and express orders. Orders for larger quantities of flower seeds are filled in the regular seed department on second floor.



One of the fourth floor rooms for express and freight orders. Only men are employed in the express and freight order departments. While all regular quantities, from packets and pounds to quarts and pecks, are done up ahead in sealed packages, yet there are also received daily orders for a number of pounds or bushels that must be put up specially and sealed.



Some of the desks in the freight and express order department on fourth floor. Each clerk has a good roomy desk where he can assemble the different packages of seeds on a given order



The illustration to the left shows another section of the order desks in the freight and express order department. On these desks the orders are assembled previous to going to the checker's table



The small illustration above shows several clerks making ready packages for the freight and express order department after they have been checked and before they are ready to be boxed. The illustration to the left shows shipments that have been checked and packed being removed to the shipping floors shown on pages 75 and 76

Before packing all freight orders are finally checked and passed by the expert checker who works in the department shown in the picture to the right. Every safeguard that makes for accuracy and perfection of service is provided



The illustration to left shows boxes for freight and express orders, which are made for us by a manufacturer a block below, and then delivered in the area-way, to be sent up by one of the elevators



The illustrations above are views in the Freight and Express Order Department, which (with the wholesale) occupies the entire fourth floor of the first Burpee building. Only men and boys are employed in this department. Before the orders are finally packed, they are checked independent of the actual filling of the orders



The small illustration to the left shows one of the elevators from the fourth floor which has just arrived at the courtyard with boxes and packages of seeds ready to be checked off and loaded by the shipping department. Hundreds of packages are dispatched daily by express and freight



The illustration at right shows the shipping clerk's office on York Avenue side. Each day the customer whose order has been filled by freight or express is notified by mail of the shipment, while, of course, bills of lading are also mailed to those whose seeds have been forwarded by freight

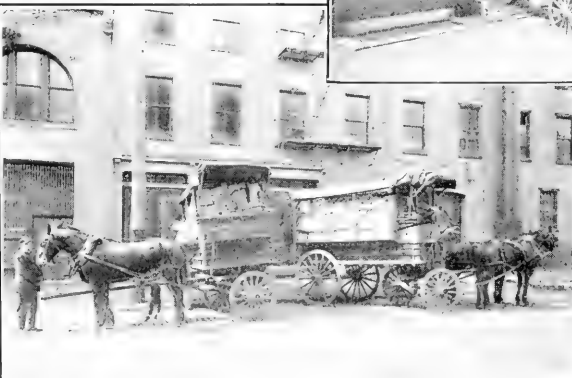
The lower picture shows a shipping floor devoted entirely to shipping by express. No freight is handled on this floor. Express wagons being loaded may be seen through the open doors





Shipments ready to go by freight. This floor is devoted to freight shipments and is entirely separate from the floor shown on page 75. For work on orders between the first sorting into States and the final shipment, see other illustrations from photographs on preceding pages

The illustration to the right shows a truck loaded with freight shipments that are billed to customers in all parts of the U. S. Many such loads leave the Burpee buildings each day during the busy season



The illustration to left pictures two express wagons loading with express shipments. Three such wagons can be loaded at one time from this floor



The Garden Column

The National Sweet Pea Show— Impressions and Reflections



The Fourteenth Annual Show of the National Sweet Pea Society was held in R. H. S. Hall on Thursday, July 16th, and was followed in the evening by a dinner at the Hotel Windsor, with the President, Mr. Hugh Dickson, in the chair, and with Mr. W. Atlee Burpee, of Philadelphia, as its most honored guest. In one of the after-dinner speeches it was jokingly suggested that with this gentleman and others from America present, the title might almost be changed to "International." The speaker voiced in this word what had passed through my mind earlier in the day as I saw two of the heads of the celebrated firm of Vilmorin, Andrieux and Co., of Paris, making a careful inspection of the exhibits, and heard not just once but several times during the course of the afternoon accents of unmistakable continental origin mingling with the more familiar Irish, Scotch and Welsh of our own tight little islands. Little did the Sicilian monk, Cupani, imagine when he sent a few seeds of his newly found pea to England in 1699, what a wonderful future was before it two centuries hence. For the last ten years, if not for longer, it has been the most popular flower grown in British gardens. To find a parallel we would have to go back to dahlia times, but even that old charmer's attractions would have paled before those of its modern rival.

We are so accustomed to find rows of sweet peas in gardens of every description that the sight does not surprise us as it should do. All the same it is an amazing fact, and I would like to quote at great length from a most interesting and instructive paper read by Mr. J. S. Brunton on the Sweet Pea Industry after the last general meeting of the Society in October, 1913. Two or three extracts, however, must suffice. "California's 3000 acres should produce 665 tons of seed. This seems almost incredible, but when we consider . . . that one firm alone has handled 134 tons of seed in a season, it may remove a little of our incredulity; but we cannot cease to wonder and to ask, where do they all go to?" A Covent Garden firm courteously gave Mr. Brunton the following statistics of their sales for the week ending June 4, 1913, as follows: Number of disbudded bunches 7554, value £104; number of ordinary bunches 19,792, value £94. They further state "in a few years the ordinary bunch will be unknown, as the demand all through last season for disbudded bunches was greater than the supply, while at times the ordinary grades were unsalable." Of the modern but very useful development, the sale of small seedlings in pots, the writer says:

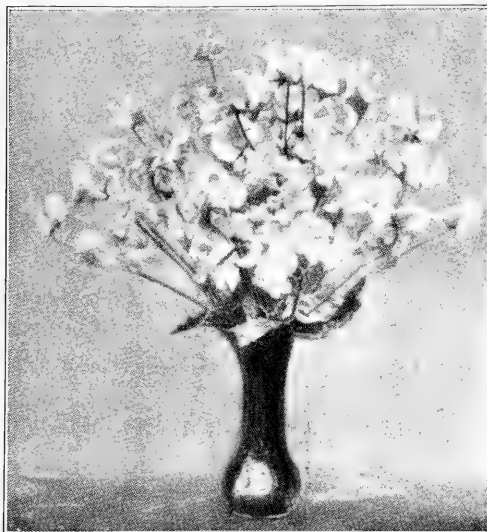
"This system has become quite general . . . the largest business lies with a nurseryman in the north of London, who sows from 6 cwt. to 7 cwt. of seed in this manner each season." To be still further impressed, we must remember that the National Show is but one, although the largest, of a hun-



Mr. W. Atlee Burpee, Philadelphia, U. S. A. Reproduced from illustration in "The Queen"

dred and thirty professedly devoted to sweet peas, and that over and above all these, there are all the classes given up to them in our general horticultural schedules. The United Kingdom is the sweet pea country of the world, and the great London Show has, I believe, no serious rival. Small wonder, then, that Mr. W. Atlee Burpee came all the way from the States to visit us, and that M. Philippe de Vilmorin traveled from Paris for the same purpose. I am sure their likenesses will interest readers. Mr. Burpee is head of the largest postal seed business in America. Sweet peas are one of his firm's specialties; 180 acres of them are grown for seed. The last letter Henry Eckford wrote was addressed to him. Blanche Burpee we older men remember as one of the best grandiflora or smooth standard whites before the coming of Dorothy Eckford. His

King White is claimed to be the white of the future. Last week he bought from Mr. Malcolm, the raiser, the stock of that fine 1913 silver medal variety "Fiery Cross"—it is a brilliant cerise crimson. He returns home this week to resume the cares of his huge business. The other distinguished horticulturist whose picture I am glad to have secured is M. Philippe Vilmorin.



Sweet Pea—Margaret Atlee. Reproduced from illustration in "The Queen"

France has not yet gone in for sweet peas as we have, although I know Messrs. Clarke & Sons, of Dover, have tried the experiment of issuing a French list. That not only the head (M. P. Vilmorin), but also a junior member of the firm of Vilmorin, Andrieux and Co., should come over to our show is significant, for no European firm is its superior in size or in reputation. Perhaps France is at last waking up. Perhaps Belgium is too. In the great exhibition of Ghent this last Spring, sweet peas along with carnations and roses were the chief glories of the show. What now did these notable visitors see on this occasion in Vincent Square? A fine show, but by no means the best of the fourteen the society has held. Considering the hot and dry time which we have gone through in the growing season, the flowers that were staged surprised not only Mr. Burpee but also Mr. Hugh Dickson, the president, and Mr. William Cuthbertson, of Dobbie's. Each of these three gentlemen told me this, and no three opinions are better worth listening to.

In conclusion I would congratulate the secretary, Mr. Tigwell, and the chairman of the committee, Mr. F. W. Harvey, on a successful year and a good show. No one, I feel sure, will support this sentiment of mine more whole-heartedly than the honored and capable president, Mr. Hugh Dickson, who is one of the keenest sweet pea men in the world, and a fine representative of British horticulture, worthy to take his place in these pages beside Vilmorin of France and Burpee of the United States.

(Signed) JOSEPH JACOB.

From *The North American*, Philadelphia, Pa., May 19, 1915

\$1.39 SWEET PEA SEED GIVES OUT FINE BLOOM

"Fiery Cross" Variety, Owned by W. Atlee Burpee, Costliest in World

The costliest sweet pea blossom that ever flung to the sunlight a banner of beauty and perfumed the air with its delicate fragrance, burst into bloom yesterday in one of the long, low glass houses at Fordhook Farms, W. Atlee Burpee's large testing grounds near Doylestown.

On a stem nearly a foot long—in itself a sign of sap regal—this first "Fiery Cross" to blossom in America vindicated, by its size, shape and flaming hue, the judgment of the well-known Philadelphian who last July, at the sweet pea show in London, paid the record price of \$417 an ounce for the first three ounces of "Fiery Cross" seed ever raised.

One good look at the display of this new variety, which evidenced its rare worth by winning the highest award—the silver medal offered by the National Sweet Pea Society of England—convinced Mr. Burpee there was no use haggling over a price. So he hunted up A. Malcolm, the noted Scotch grower of these lovely flowers, who after many years of trying finally produced the flaming scarlet hue which characterizes this latest wonder in the flower world.

"How much seed have you?" asked Burpee.

"Three ounces," answered Malcolm.

"Will you take 250 pounds sterling for three ounces and the right to introduce?"

"I will," said the Scotchman.

Now, three ounces of sweet pea seed contain about 900 seeds. So for each of the shriveled peas which were packed for shipment with as much care as a pearl necklace, the tidy sum of \$1.39 was paid. And if the ship which carried these seed-treasures across the Atlantic had gone down, the world's supply of this particular variety would have been lost.

It goes without saying that the folks at Fordhook, from owner down, have been watching the "Fiery Cross" test plants in eager anticipation of the day when the first blossoms would appear. Every care known to the experts who look after the 180 varieties of sweet peas there tested each year was bestowed on the four vines which had sprouted out of four \$1.39 seeds.

Day before yesterday one bud was beginning to show a tinge of color, and if the sun had not been veiled in gray all day, this firstborn of the new flower would have been a Sunday child—"bonnie and bright and good and gay." But there was no sun at all—as every one knows—so the premiere was postponed.

But the "Fiery Cross" that made its bow yesterday was just as bonnie and bright and gay as if it had come along on Sunday, and if all goes well, many a garden in this and other lands next Summer will be more beautiful because of it—not at \$1.39 per seed, however.

Burpee's Sweet Peas

Prize Winners wherever exhibited

At the Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco, Cal., June 11 to 13, 1915

From *Florists' Exchange*, New York, N. Y., July 3, 1915

W. Atlee Burpee & Co., of Philadelphia, Pa., were awarded the silver medal presented by the British National Sweet Pea Society for their splendid display, covering 100 sq. ft. The center portion of the exhibit was entirely given over to Messrs. Burpee & Co.'s magnificent novelty Fiery Cross, which attracted a tremendous amount of attention all day on account of its brilliant color. The jury of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition recommended

that a gold medal be awarded for the exhibit. The collection included about fifty of Messrs. Burpee & Co.'s leading novelties and especially fine vases of Margaret Atlee, Thomas Stevenson, Helen Grosvenor, King Manuel, Stirling Stent, and King Edward Spencer. Messrs. Burpee & Co. are to be congratulated on the spirit they showed in arranging for this exhibition at so great a distance from Philadelphia. An award of merit was voted for Fiery Cross.

Burpee's Sweet Peas

Gold Medal and Silver Cup at the Newport Show, American Sweet Pea Society, July 15 and 16, 1915

From *Florists' Exchange*, New York, N. Y., July 24, 1915

The largest trade display was that of W. Atlee Burpee & Co., Philadelphia, who staged upward of 100 varieties on a table running the length of the hall, occupying 200 sq. ft. The flowers had been grown locally, and were of the highest possible quality, on long stems, three and four to a stem, bright, clear, clean and of good substance. In this group, which won the society's silver cup and the gold medal offered by the British National Sweet Pea Society for the largest and most meritorious exhibit, there were three novelties, Fiery Cross, winner of the A. S.

P. S. silver medal of the year; President, a good scarlet, and Cherub, which we have described as an improved Mrs. C. W. Breadmore. The stand was arranged by Geo. W. Kerr and was the center of attraction during the two days. It included, besides those mentioned, especially fine vases of Irish Belle, Illuminator, King White, Charles Foster, Robert Sydenham, Royal Purple, Primrose Spencer, New Vermilion Flake, Mrs. Routzahn Spencer, Lavender, George Herbert, Margaret Atlee, Afterglow, Duplex Unique and King Edward Spencer.



Part of the gold medal and silver cup exhibit of W. Atlee Burpee & Co., Philadelphia



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